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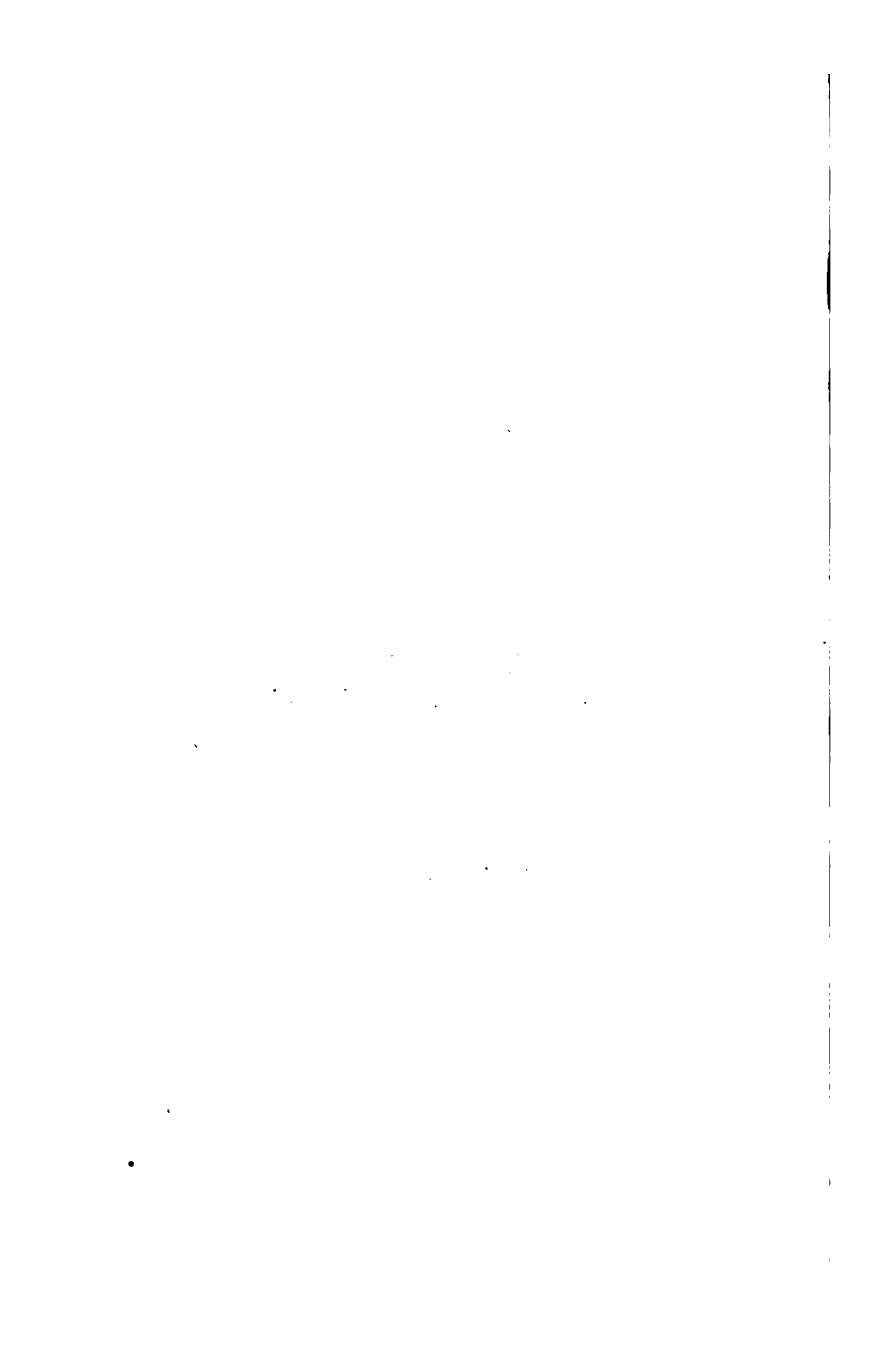




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**HERBERT GREY;**

**OR,**

**THE LAWYER'S OFFICE.**

**BY**

**MRS. H. WILSON.**

**LONDON:**

**W. KENT AND CO. 28, PATERNOSTER ROW;**

**BATTEN, CLAPHAM.**

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# HERBERT GREY;

OR,

THE LAWYER'S OFFICE.

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## CHAPTER I.

WHAT town or village is there of any note, which has not been, at some time or another, the scene of some tragedy. We will suppose that the picturesque town, we will call Leabridge, was no exception to this rule. In the memory no doubt of many, if not of most of its oldest inhabitants, there existed the remembrance of a famous trial for forgery, some years previously.

The aristocracy of Leabridge, in former years, had counted the Glendinning family, amongst its brightest ornaments.

Old Sir Philip Glendinning had been a noble specimen of a good old English gentleman. His two sons, Philip and Arthur, were considered as fine representatives of the ancient house of Glendinning.

Philip, the eldest son, had been an especial favorite. When old age incapacitated the father from taking an active part in the management of his large possessions, this son had been appointed as manager. The baronet owned extensive property in Scotland, besides a splendid estate in Leabridge, which was his favorite place of residence.

About four or five and twenty years previous to the opening of my tale, Sir Philip Glendinning had lost his wife, and the shock of her death had left a blank in his existence, which nothing seemed to fill up; but she had been a great invalid during the last ten years of her life, and had been almost entirely confined to her own apartments. The love which had unwaveringly been hers, during her lifetime, was continued towards her memory by the affectionate husband, but he shewed even increased love for the son, Philip, who had been ever his wife's constant attendant during her illness, and had, by his dutiful behaviour, won a deservedly large portion of his parent's love. Imagine, then, this father's horror, when Philip was accused of having committed forgery to a large extent. The Baronet, Sir Philip, persisted in his son's well-earned character for integrity. He endeavoured, by every means in his power, to prove him free from such an imputation; but other names besides his own had been forged, and justice must take its course. Everything in the course of the trial seemed to point so decidedly against Philip, the evidence being, however, only circumstantial, that the verdict had to be given against him. A special

request was made by the jury, that as the prisoner's previous character had been above suspicion, that the sentence be mitigated to transportation for life.

When his youngest son, Arthur, joined his testimony against his brother, all hope fled from the heart of the poor old man; and where deep, confiding love had before existed, the father now gave vent to bitter invectives against the son, whom he thought had so cruelly betrayed his confidence, and he refused to have anything to do with the maintenance of Philip's sorrowing wife and infant child.

This severe blow soon put an end to his sufferings. He spent a few months sunk in almost entire imbecility; and though, ere he expired, a few brief minutes of restored consciousness were granted him, during which he declared his forgiveness, and his earnest wish, that Arthur would seek out, and make a comfortable provision for Philip's worse than widowed wife, he had not time to alter his will in her favour. But there were unfortunately no witnesses to this conversation; and Arthur, though of course coming into possession of all his late father's estates, on account of Philip's disgrace—(for after the trial he had been transported for life, though to the last he persisted in declaring his perfect innocence of the crime imputed to him),—never took any notice of the late Baronet's wishes as regarded his brother's family.

Loud had been the complaints showered on the head of Arthur, for the cupidity of conduct he had exhibited on the occasion. Many voices were heard to utter

curses against the man who could dare to stand by and see his brother disgraced, without attempting to justify him in any way; and very frequent were the remarks which pointed out Arthur himself, as being more likely to be the real offender than their beloved young squire, Philip. Indeed, to those who were well acquainted with the character of Philip Glendinning, nothing seemed more improbable than the idea of his committing such a crime. However, as we have seen, the evidence appeared totally at variance with this suggestion, and the prisoner had been reminded that transportation was a more merciful punishment than that of hanging.

Philip had begged his wife to remain in England, assuring her that many months could not elapse before his innocence must be proved.

But years passed on, and the event which had caused so much attention and anxiety at first, had now passed away from the minds of the majority of the people, or was remembered only as a painful bye-gone event.

The present baronet, Sir Arthur, had retired to Scotland, and his mansion in Leabridge was vacated and committed to the care of his steward, and to the surveillance of his solicitor, Mr. Phillips. Soon after coming into possession of his property, he had married a very handsome and amiable lady, whom he persuaded into the idea that he was everything that heart could wish; but unfortunately, after a few short months of comparative happiness, she found out, too late, that he to whom she had given the whole warm affections of

her youthful nature, was utterly unworthy of the love she had bestowed. After giving birth to several children, only one of whom, a boy of most engaging disposition, lived to grow up, Lady Glendinning had at length succumbed under the neglect and ill-treatment to which she was daily exposed, and she had been carried to her grave as much beloved and regretted as the Baronet was disliked and despised. Her son Cuthbert had been her only tie to earth; he inherited much of his mother's amiability of disposition, and he had clung to her with an almost unparalleled devotion. Often had his young heart swelled with just indignation at the sight of his father's brutality towards his dear mother, and hard had been his struggles to keep from openly defying his cruel parent; but Cuthbert had early been taught by his mother the duty of honouring those whom God had placed over him. But as he grew to manhood, and his gentle mother's influence was removed from him, unable longer to brook the harsh treatment offered him, Cuthbert one day made a great shew of resistance. Enraged by this conduct, the Baronet stormed and raved, threatening to disinherit him if he did not implicitly obey him for the future; angry words followed on both sides, during which Sir Arthur bade his son leave the house immediately, and not shew his face again until he had begged his sire's forgiveness, and promised better behaviour for the future. That very night Cuthbert Glendinning collected his few treasures together, and taking with him the few trinkets which his mother had given him

at various times, he bade a long adieu to the home of his fathers, and before the morning light was far on his way. For some time no news had reached the Baronet about his son; but at length it was rumoured that Cuthbert had enlisted as a common soldier, and was passing by the assumed name of Thompson. None could tell what had been the father's feelings, when he discovered the loss he had sustained. But his cold heart had felt something like love for his noble son, even though he had sunk affection, in his love of undue discipline. He was never known to have alluded since then to the subject, and he seemed to have forgotten that he had ever had a child to call his own.

Strange as it may appear, Sir Arthur had always managed to keep up some sort of a friendship with the good vicar of Leabridge, the Rev. Edward Gordon. From boyhood they had been acquainted, and as the integrity of the Baronet's character rested only upon suspicion, Mr. Gordon was not the man, for the sake of a supposition, to refuse to acknowledge one to whom he might in some way be able to minister for good. Of the Baronet's behaviour to his wife and son, the vicar was not a competent judge, as Sir Arthur's married life had been spent, with but few exceptions, almost completely in Scotland. Mr. Gordon had only seen Sir Arthur on his best behaviour, when the Vicar had been their guest.

At the time of the commencement of my story, the Baronet had sent a most pressing invitation to the family of the Gordons, as he was anxious to make the

acquaintance of the young people, whom he had not seen since they were children. With the invitation came the promise of a direct appointment in a cavalry regiment, then stationed abroad, for young Howard Gordon, a fine youth of eighteen, the vicar's only son, who had chosen the army for his profession, and had passed all his examinations, but was now waiting for an appointment, with small chance of success, unless his father purchased a commission for him.

This step had at length been agreed upon, when, most unexpectedly, came Sir Arthur's kind offer. Mr. Gordon was not in very good health at the time, and it was therefore decided that the invitation should be accepted, and a friend of his happening just then to be without duty of his own, the Vicar begged his services for the parish, knowing that he would endeavour to carry out Mr. Gordon's views as far as possible. It was a rare thing for the pastor to absent himself from the parish, where for the last forty years, his late father, the Rev. Thornton Gordon, and now the son, the Rev. Edward Gordon, had laboured so laboriously and successfully. The Vicar was one of those ministers of whom unfortunately there are so few, who sought to win souls to Christ from pure love to Him, and a sincere desire for their spiritual welfare. He never seemed to tire or grow weary in well doing; none sought for help in vain, and all classes loved and revered the pastor, whom they felt laboured so earnestly for their eternal good. He was also, fortunately, well versed in the medical science, and therefore was able to



minister to the temporal as well as spiritual wants of many among his poorer brethren. This power gave him great control over their feelings; often would he gain an entrance by this means into their cottages, by ministering temporal relief,—for in many instances where the door would have been barred to the clergyman, to the doctor they could accord a ready welcome. Mr. Gordon always blessed God for granting him this means of furthering his higher labours; for he never allowed such an opportunity to pass without adding the spiritual medicine, which he knew how to administer in so gentle and persuasive a manner, as to win, in most cases, the hearts of his patients. But his incessant labours were telling upon his health, and as he had a righteous horror of what he termed suicide (for he held the opinion, that if a person does not take all lawful and proper care of himself, he is, in a measure, little short of a self-murderer) the Vicar had for some time felt the necessity of a change for a short period. He considered himself, because “bought with a price,” as the property of another, even of that Master whose precious blood had been shed as the price of his ransom.

In person, he was of finely proportioned make, and his countenance was singularly pleasing. His mildly beaming eye won instant confidence, and he had a smile and a kind word for every one. His age was about fifty, but his hair was sprinkled with grey. It added to, rather than diminished his personal attractions. In manners he was a polished gentleman, with enough of worldly wis-

dom, to make him a shrewd reader of character, and for this faculty he had ever been thankful, as it enabled him the more readily to guard against deception of every kind.

Mrs. Gordon was also a most amiable and agreeable person. She was a true helpmeet to her husband, and often, since her children were grown up, had she accompanied the vicar on his rounds among the sick and dying, when disease had been rife in the neighbourhood. Fearlessly trusting to an over-ruling Providence, when in the path of duty, she had never flinched. Side by side they had walked through life, and *she* would not hesitate to face the dangers to which *he* was exposed. Many were the fainting hearts her courageous example had strengthened, and her cheerful words encouraged. A woman can often minister to the necessities of others, and administer comfort, where a man's efforts are unavailing, and she was dearly loved therefore by all the parishioners for her pious exertions on their behalf, and for her kind disposition. It had been her earnest wish, that her son should follow his father's profession, but as the young man had expressed his utter abhorrence of choosing such a calling, unless he felt himself specially inspired with the belief that he could willingly devote himself to such a life of constant self-devotion, she had wisely foreborne the darling ambition of her heart, knowing that unless Howard was a willing messenger of the glad tidings of salvation, he would never be a successful one. She encouraged herself with the hope, that her son would prove as true a servant and

soldier of the cross, while fighting the battles of his earthly Sovereign, as he would be if more peculiarly marked out for that purpose. To all appearance Howard Gordon was one well worthy to justify a mother's fondest hopes. Their other child was a daughter, one year younger than Howard: she was a lady-like looking girl; well taught, and naturally clever; a good musician and a pretty songstress. Like many young people, she was rather shy, though at the same time she was rather vain of her person and accomplishments. But these little failings, as her parents hoped, would be corrected as she gained experience by age. She was a very affectionate daughter, and a great admirer of her brother, whom she thought almost perfection. Laura was tall, and graceful in appearance, her hair was of a pretty chesnut brown, her eyes large and lustrous, her prettily curved mouth still more attractive by the fine pearly teeth she displayed when she laughed.

The young people were charmed at the idea of visiting Scotland, and all looked forward to the hope that Mr. Gordon would by its means be restored to health. Many were the blessings showered upon them as they left Leabridge, and many were the expressions of sorrow which were uttered at losing their beloved pastor, even for so short a period.

## CHAPTER II.

IN one of the best parts of the town of Leabridge, stood a handsome building, the residence of John Phillips, Esq., Solicitor. He was a very benevolent, though eccentric man. Possessing a good property, he made a right use of the riches entrusted to him; and few knew from himself how his charity was exercised; but, many were the kind deeds discovered to have been his work. He was by name, a solicitor, but he did not trouble himself much with the management of his business; for except on special occasions, when his opinion was needed to give more weight to the decision, he was seldom at his office beyond a few minutes each day. He was impressed with the idea that his energies were required in another and a broader field of action. He wished to benefit his fellow creatures, and would speak of himself as "a would be public benefactor," and in order to effect his purpose, as he supposed, in a broad and general manner, he indulged his fancy and employed his time by writing essays, generally touching upon what he thought the prevailing errors of the day, and then pointing out the way in which these abuses might be corrected.

Mr. Phillips was a man of about five and fifty, "a confirmed old bachelor" every one said. He boasted that he had none of the anxieties of a married man, none of

the wear and tear of a family man, none of the discordances of a divided household. He knew himself. His tastes, his pursuits, his wishes were known to himself; his political views were strong and unprejudiced, but he refused to discuss politics with any one but himself. He said he had no one at home to interfere with his tastes or pursuits, no one to thwart his wishes, therefore he had no curtain lectures or angry words and contrary wishes to dread. He talked aloud to himself when at home, he reasoned with himself. He praised himself, he smiled on his own performances. He had no troubles at home, so he said, "unless he should think there was no trouble at all in the world, he must occasionally mingle with his fellow men." He was not averse to the society of a friend or two, and most hospitably were they entertained; but anything beyond the bounds of strict sobriety was understood to be most positively forbidden, for Mr. Phillips rightly argued with himself and published it in his writings, "how can a man teach temperate habits to his inferiors, when he himself, by the abuse of good things, sets a bad example which they are always too prone to follow." Mr. Phillips had such a cheerful hearty manner, and was so benevolent in many ways, that he was an universal favourite notwithstanding his eccentricities. The Gordons were great friends of his, and while they respected the solid worth of his character, they lamented and strove to overcome his little peculiarities. His cheerful merry countenance was peculiarly benign: one especial morning, as seated in a comfortable arm-chair at a well covered

table, in his favourite apartment, the study, he perused aloud for his own special edification a paper on which he had been employed; in fact a work which was to form part of an Essay on "Married Life, its Happiness and its Misery; with the plainest directions for making this so called Lottery, as little a matter of chance as possible." When commencing this important subject, Mr. Phillips had argued with himself thus—"Am I, though a bachelor, bound to forego this topic; an author must treat of other scenes than those of his own daily experience; he must touch upon other troubles than those which meet his eye; he must place himself in the position of others, or how can he deal with their difficulties, or correct abuses which he knows exist, though he himself has not been called upon to endure them."

But we will step unseen into the study and listen to Mr. Phillip's Essay, as he commences to read aloud with self only, as he thinks, for his audience. Fortunately for our patience he has only written a few brief lines to day, so we need only listen to these. "It is indeed true that love is blind. What is the cause of so much of the misery which we daily witness in society amongst the married people? Is it not that blinded by the chance beauty, or the fascinating manners, or still worse, the *tinselled* charms of some fair one, we fancy ourselves in love, and foolishly plunge into the married state? What chance could I, or could others have, of knowing aught of the real character of the being to whom I entrust my happiness, if I go on loving when I

willingly resolve to be blind to the defects of temper, &c. which to a more impartial beholder fail not to be very apparent? If I or others love in this way we believe in an impossibility in supposing that we have found perfection in any living creature. We are vexed and are ready to give the lie to any one who would attempt to remove the scales from our eyes. But after a few months have been spent in the married state, when the new toy has ceased to please, when the blind idolatry of the lover gives place to the sober clear-sightedness of the husband, and the charming excitement gives way to the monotony of every-day life; then what a change comes o'er the spirit of the dream; love is no longer blind as before, and the defects which before marriage had been so charmingly glossed over, or had not been brought to light, are now a daily source of annoyance and disgust; the idol of gold becomes a shattered image of worthless clay, and the blind idolatry of former days gives way to the heartless cruel neglect of a deceived and deceiving reality. The being who had been supposed faultless is now, because the real character is too late known and studied, supposed to be as full of vices as formerly he or she had been supposed to be full of virtues. Oh, men and women of earth, why will you seek for *perfection* here; why will you dream of an *immaculate* fellow-sinner; why will you by blinding your eyes to the little failings you know every human being must have, however good they may be, why will you lay the foundation of so much after misery, by foolishly imagining the object of your

blind idolatry, is sinless; why will you give yourselves the twofold misery of imagining the being you have sworn to love, less worthy of your love, because you find they have failings, or because you find out too late that your pursuits, your tastes, your inclinations are different. Now, my friends, take my advice and look only for perfection so far as you know that those you love are walking in the narrow way which leads to life eternal; look only for perfection in those acts which, guided and directed by the unerring word of God, are the most likely to be as perfect as any mortal acts can be; such people are the least likely to cause disappointment. And to the worldling who could find no pleasure in such a companion, I would use a worldly word of advice and say "Look before you leap." Do not marry for the sake of a pretty face, beauty is fleeting. Do not marry for the sake of money merely, money may be lost, or may only exist in imagination, but wait patiently until you see whether the friendship they profess is genuine, whether it will stand a little rough usage, for if it falters at the first blast of adversity then be sure you would not be happy with that being whom you would swear, and who would have to swear in return, to take, for better or for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, &c. But those are wisest who base their affection on years of trial, when the lasting and true nature of the friendship has been proved, when solid worth forms the foundation of the affection, when passion ceases to assert the mastery. There must be real respect for the individual




beloved, or, believe me that love will never last. Pause I beg of *you* who are unmarried, pause before you take the irrevocable step which *may* lead to happiness, but will be more likely to end in misery unless based on a sure foundation."

Mr. Phillips paused and looked round as if to receive the applause of an admiring audience, and as he appeared pleased and contented, we may presume that he met with the response he required. Having read and re-read his production, Mr. Phillips pulled out his watch, and finding that it pointed to two o'clock, he rang the bell, and his usual mid-day repast was immediately served him in his favourite apartment. His servants knew better than to announce the luncheon as ready for him until he had summoned them; and woe betide them if everything was not prepared so as to be placed before him as soon as he was ready for it. It was the only time at which Mr. Phillips was either unpunctual or was severe in his injunctions to be unmolested. He considered his writings as sacred until the servants were gone, and not catch a stray word by their entering until his writing and consequent reading was ended.

His meal concluded, he rose, and leaving his house, he walked leisurely on, till he came to a large business-like building, on the door of which was a bright brass plate, inscribed with the name of John Phillips and Co., Solicitors.

The house was as bright and cheerful-looking a building as one could wish to see, for Mr. Phillips held the idea that if work was to be well done, the appliances



and the residence must be as pleasant as possible, and could not understand why offices should be more gloomy or dirtier than private residences.

Entering the office Mr. Phillips smiled, and nodded to each of the young gentlemen who were seated at their desks; they were principally articled clerks, and though seeing Mr. Phillips so seldom, it was yet a pleasure to them to welcome his cheerful presence. "Good morning, young gentlemen," he said. The clerks glanced up at the office clock, and smiled at each other, as they returned his salutation.

"Good morning to you, Mr. Jinks; how are you to-day, my friend? As busy as ever I see," continued Mr. Phillips; "I wonder whether you cease working, even in your 'sleep. I fear, my friend, your final resting-place will be an unhappy one for you, if you cannot be surrounded by work of some kind." The person addressed was a little ferretty-eyed individual, the very opposite in appearance to Mr. Phillips; but he was no despicable character, though so peculiar in person. His face was puckered, deep lines of thought wrinkled his brow, his hair was short and stood in upright bristles on his head. His eyes were small and piercing in expression, like those of a ferret. His hands were small but possessing no appendages at the ends of his fingers, for he kept his nails well bitten down. When any new case came before his notice, he always vigorously attacked these unfortunate nails: some people said, because his late lamented wife had occasionally, in fits of uncontrolled temper, given poor Josiah a

taste of her scratching propensities, therefore he had resolved to avoid all fear of the like propensity himself. But ill-natured people are always ready to make unkind remarks, so we will suppose this an unfounded charge as Mr. Jinks always spoke of his lost lady as of a singularly superior being.

Mr. Jinks was a man of great note in his profession. Clear in his views, he was apt to take a just and unprejudiced view of the cases committed to him, and parents thought themselves fortunate when they could place their sons under Mr. Jinks' instruction. He had been originally head clerk to Mr. Phillips but was now promoted to be partner, and a useful and energetic partner he proved himself. He was decidedly liked by the young men under him, and they all tried to please him by being studious and attentive.

To Mr. Phillips's greeting he replied, "Morning, sir, morning. Hope I see you well, sir. Nice morning for work, sir. Plenty to do and willing hands to do it, sir. Have you heard when young Mr. Grey is to join us, sir?"

"Yes, he will be here presently, to look at you all, so that he may commence in right earnest to-morrow morning. I like that youth, Jinks. There is something very pleasing in his manner, and I hope you will be satisfied with him. I wish I could help you, my good friend, but a man cannot be in two places at once, and cannot be occupied in two pursuits at the same moment. My work progresses, Jinks, and when a man seeks to benefit his fellow creatures, he must necessarily devote much time to them."

As he spoke, the door of the office opened, and a young man of about two-and-twenty, or thereabouts, entered with a low bow to the partners. He was a fine, handsome man, with dark waving hair, and a tolerably bushy pair of whiskers. His features were regular, and his complexion good; a shade of melancholy overspread his countenance when he was silent, but his speaking eyes relieved the otherwise sad expression, which entirely disappeared when he was animated.

"Well, Grey, how are you? I am glad to welcome you here, my young friend. I must introduce you to these young gentlemen, who will be your future companions. Mr. Grey,—Mr. Vincent, Mr. Fletcher, Mr. Carew, Mr. Walrond, Mr. Curtis. This is my esteemed friend, Mr. Josiah Jinks," Mr. Phillips said, as he led Herbert Grey up to him. "Jinks, my good fellow, you have met before, but we must keep up the etiquette of the office, so allow me to introduce you in form. Mr. Jinks,—Mr. Herbert Grey."

"Glad to see you, sir; proud to make the acquaintance of a friend of Mr. Phillips. Hope you like work, Mr. Grey; there is nothing like work, sir; we have some distinguished clients, sir, on our office books. Do you see all those iron chests, sir; there are the family papers of the Fitz-Wigrams, the Perkins-Williams, the Herbert-Vanes, the Glendinnings, the Claridges, the Glencorns, etc.; however, sir, you will perceive that we have no lack of business passing through our hands; and though I say it, I must do

justice to my young friends also, and mention the fact, that I believe our work is thoroughly done. If you want work done well, we can do it here. My honoured partner thinks we shall suit each other, and if you are fond of work, sir, I am sure we shall be good friends. I call myself 'the working bee,' and a good deal of honey I do indeed gather, for nothing is so sweet to me as work. Allow me, sir," concluded Mr. Jinks, who was quite out of breath after this unusually long speech, "allow me, sir, to introduce you to your desk and stool. They were placed here specially for you, sir, and I feel sure you will make a good use of them." Herbert Grey thanked Mr. Jinks, and expressed his earnest hope that he should not prove unworthy of the confidence placed in him by the partners; and he trusted by his diligence to prove his gratitude, in some slight measure, to his benefactor, Mr. Phillips. That gentleman pulled out his watch in reply, and muttering something about being late, he rose to take his departure. "Well, Jinks," he said, "I think there is nothing more to discuss; so, as there are some letters to write, I will take leave of you, as I can write them better at home. So farewell for to-day, you know where I am to be found, if anything important turns up. Remember me to your good mother, Mr. Grey, and tell her, that if I am not too much engaged this evening, I will endeavour to pay my respects to her. Take care of yourself, and don't let Jinks be too unmerciful to you. Good day to you all, and if Jinks can spare the time, drink our young friend's health,

and wish him success; I will send my man down to you, with some good old Burgundy."

With a smile and a nod, Mr. Phillips was gone, and heard not the words of thanks which followed him, for the clerks well knew that with the wine would come a cheque for no niggardly amount, to be divided amongst them. They knew Mr. Phillips well.

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## CHAPTER III.

We will leave Herbert Grey steadily progressing in Mr. Jinks' favour, by his application to the work placed before him, while we briefly review the circumstances of his past life, as known to Mr. Phillips and to the Vicar, with whom he was also a favorite. Mr. Gordon had been riding a spirited horse one day, in an unfrequented part of his district, and the animal had suddenly taken fright, and after a manful resistance on the part of the rider, it had at length thrown him. Stunned by the fall, the Vicar was lying on the ground, in a state of insensibility, for some minutes : when he recovered consciousness, he found a young stranger bending over him, with looks of deep concern. His handkerchief had been dipped in a clear stream, which flowed near to the spot where the Vicar fell, and he had laved the brow and hands of the sufferer with the refreshing liquid. The horse had been caught and tied to a tree, and his hat, freed from the dust which covered it, as it rolled along the road. Rising with difficulty, Mr. Gordon politely and gratefully thanked the young stranger for his attentions. Finding the Vicar was a good deal shaken, the youth insisted on walking beside the horse until they reached the gentleman's residence ; and feeling a wish to learn who he was, Mr. Gordon, after expressing a fear lest he should

be fatigued, at length consented, on condition that Mr. Grey promised to rest awhile at the Vicarage. To this the young man agreed, and during the journey home, and the subsequent chat in the house, the Vicar had enquired about the stranger's place of residence, and of his parentage. After saying that he had only one parent living, for his mother had been widowed many years ago, the youth hesitated, but at last said, endeavouring to hide his confusion by a laugh; "There is nothing to be ashamed of, sir, in honest poverty, but it is hard to acknowledge that our home is so poor a one, that I doubt if my mother would care for having it known. I am looking about for some employment, whereby I can procure her a more comfortable abode. But though a man has the will to work, it is difficult to procure what would not be considered as too menial an employment. My dear mother, sir, was born and brought up as a lady, and she will not consent to my taking any situation but such as she says suits my position as a gentleman, though, God knows, I am not proud myself; I have endeavoured to humour her wishes, but I must now accept anything that offers, for I can no longer be idle."—"My friend," replied the Vicar, "one good turn deserves another. You have helped me, and now allow me to try and help you. I want a gentleman to read with my son of an evening, and if you can feel competent to undertake the post, which is not a very arduous one, and if you can give me some sort of reference, we will talk more on the subject." "Oh! thank you, sir;



many, many thanks ; I think, as far as my qualifications go, in the educational line, that I am fully competent, for my mother gave me a first-rate education. She managed in some way, from the time that I entered my twelfth year, to give me schooling until I reached my eighteenth year ; how she managed it I know not, for she sent me abroad for four years, and it was not until my return, that I found out how she had been robbing herself of everything, and been working night and day to provide the necessary means. I have indeed much to thank her for. I was for some time, in fact for the four years, at a famous establishment in Paris, presided over by a Monsieur Nargonne, where I acquired a good knowledge of the language."

"Monsieur Antoine Nargonne?" enquired the Vicar, in some surprise; receiving a reply in the affirmative, he said, "why that is enough, Mr. Grey, for that gentleman is my brother-in-law; my late father went to France for the benefit of his health, a few years before he died; and there my sister, who accompanied him, met with Monsieur Nargonne, to whom she was engaged and married, before my father's death; and when he was too ill to travel about, my sister gave him a home. Monsieur Nargonne will no doubt speak well for you, as you were so long a time with him." "Yes, sir, I feel sure he will, as I applied to him lately, asking him if he could employ me as usher, or recommend me anywhere else; but, he said he regretted that he had only lately engaged the services of a young gentleman who had been at the

school with me; and that had he known I was in search of employment, he would have chosen me in preference to my friend, as I had passed the best examination. He promised to recommend me whenever he had a chance, so I am sure he will not refuse to speak for me now."

And so it was arranged, that unless Mr. Grey heard anything to the contrary, he should consider himself engaged from the following week, for Mr. Gordon was greatly prepossessed in the young man's favour, and wished to do him a service, as well as secure a nice companion for his son. When the young people were introduced to each other, they were mutually pleased, and Howard much enjoyed the evening's work together, Mr. Gordon very generously remunerated the teacher, and being a frequent listener during the instructions, he was struck with the beauty and truth of many of Mr. Grey's remarks, and he therefore encouraged a close intimacy between the new acquaintances. Mrs. Grey had at length expressed a wish to see the kind Vicar, and he had, therefore, been introduced to her. He found her in neat, but very poor lodgings, in the town, and he saw plainly that she was struggling against great poverty, though endeavouring to keep up some appearance of gentility. She bore evident traces of bye-gone youthful beauty; but her countenance now exhibited marks of great grief. She was of middle age, tall and slight in figure; her face was interesting in its melancholy beauty; her hair was almost white, though it had evidently, in

former years, been of raven blackness. When in her prime of life she must have been a fine attractive looking woman. She wore a widow's cap, and was habited in deep mourning, though so many years had elapsed since the death of her husband.

Finding, after a longer acquaintance, that Mrs. Grey was, in mind as well as in manners, a perfect lady, Mr. Gordon suggested the desirability of offering her the situation of finishing governess to their daughter, and, as the lady's health precluded her attendance at the Vicarage, they proposed that Laura should visit her daily. The offer, delicately made, was gratefully accepted, and, by degrees, the Gordons were able to persuade Mrs. Grey to accept of many little additions to her comfort.

Finding that the son's inclination was for a solicitor's profession, the Vicar introduced him to the notice of Mr. Phillips, who promised to article Herbert to himself as soon as he had qualified him, by a course of training, for the profession. For this purpose he sent the young man to the office of a conveyancer, a friend of his, where Herbert studied well and diligently. Book-keeping and double entry were soon mastered, and, all preliminaries gone through, Mr. Phillips presented him with his indentures, and promised to teach him, through Mr. Jinks, not only the work of an attorney, but also to give him a salary, which last good news must be kept a strict secret from his fellow-articled clerks. Mr. Phillips was, as we have seen, much pleased with his young friend, who bade fair to be a great comfort to him.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE travelling carriage which conveyed the Gordons from their last stages drove rapidly up the broad and handsome avenue leading to Glendinning Castle, the seat of Sir Arthur Glendinning, Bart. Standing on the step of his lordly mansion, awaiting the arrival of his guests, was the master of the castle, a man of about the same age—or, it might be, even a year or two younger than Mr. Gordon. He was, however, considerably older in appearance, and might have passed for an old man, for his form, which was spare, was bent as if from age, and his countenance also, with his white locks of hair, seemed to betoken a long life either of grief or of evil habits. In early years he had, as we have seen, given way to passions of temper; now, he was too fond of exciting drinks, and if evil propensities are indulged they never fail to leave their traces on the constitution. He was really looking forward with pleasure to the visit of his friends, for he had lately grown weary of his own company.

As the family approached the mansion, poor Laura began to feel very nervous at the idea of having to be welcomed by a stranger, for she was so seldom from home, it was a novelty, which she found was likely to be more attractive in anticipation than in reality. How-

ever, she was slightly reassured by the kindly greeting she received from the Baronet, who was much struck with her appearance. The rest of the party were equally pleased with their reception, so that all was pleasant on their first arrival, which goes a great way towards the after comfort of some people. The hall was lined with servants, all plushed and powdered, who obsequiously bowed as the guests passed by, and there was also no lack of female attendants. The Baronet requested the attendance of Mrs. Pearce, the house-keeper, who after receiving instructions to shew the ladies their apartment, in her turn requested, through one of her satellites, the presence of the lady's maids, who were too grand, of course, to carry anything upstairs save themselves, and, therefore, the housemaids' services were required also, to take any small parcels which might be wanted by the new arrivals.

Refreshments were served in their several apartments in first-rate style, and an intimation given that the dinner would be on the table at seven o'clock precisely.

A loud-sounding gong proclaimed the half-hour of waiting for this important meal, and a second call, of more prolonged duration, announced the fact that the covers were laid and all was ready.

The dining-room was a most spacious and handsome apartment. The furniture was of magnificently carved oak, black with age and polish. The chairs were of the antique style, high backs, with moroon colour velvet cushions; the window curtains of the same hue. The

chandeliers of massive bronze were well lighted up with wax candles, as were also the various sconces ranged round the walls of the room and the well illuminated table, so that the otherwise rather sombre appearance of the apartment was relieved by the well arranged lighting of it. The sideboards, as well as the table, were supplied with magnificently chased articles in gold and silver plate, and the exquisitely cut glass was in keeping with the rest of the furniture.

The meal was well served; everything was there to tempt the most fastidious appetite; but not one of the party seemed much disposed to do justice to the luxurious fare before them. The meal was two hours in progression, and poor Laura thought she should never be able to endure such another tedious affair. Conversation was attempted, but Sir Arthur was not much of a talker at any time; the young people were strangers there, and not accustomed to much change of society. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon kept up a small running fire of remarks, occasionally joined in by the others, but it was a melancholy meal after all. There was so much state and ceremony to be kept up that right glad was Laura when her mother, by a graceful hint to the host, requested permission to retire. Mr. Gordon took pity on Howard and begged, as he was still a youth, that he join the ladies. No sooner had they left the room than Sir Arthur commenced exclaiming—"What a lovely girl that is of yours, Gordon, she is so graceful and pretty! I should be proud to call her my own daughter. That is a fine youth too, that Howard, I must have a talk with

him to-morrow. I am not a ladies' man, you know, Gordon, and I cannot make the pretty speeches to them I used to be able to do in former years. How old is your son, I forget just now?" "Howard is just eighteen," replied Mr. Gordon, "he is a fine youth, certainly, and what is better, I hope he is a good one. Excuse my curiosity, Sir Arthur, but have you ever heard more of your own son; he was a nice youth when I saw him last, now some years ago; he must have grown into a bearded man now."

The Baronet pushed his chair from the table, then drew it in again, and drank off a large goblet of wine. "Forgive me, my friend," said Mr. Gordon, "if I have offended you in any way; I had no such intention, but merely fearing lest by accepting your kind offer for my son, your own may be injured in any way, for he would no doubt have been thankful for such a good post." "Gordon, had I ten thousand appointments to give away, I would rather give them to the meanest beggars in the street, than dream of giving one to that fellow who has so demeaned himself."

"I am not acquainted with any of the particulars of his leaving," answered the vicar, "and I am sorry I mentioned the subject; but it has occurred to me, that he might long ago have repented of his rash act, and I can speak from experience of the comfort it is to have a son to cheer our homes."

The Vicar knew enough of Cuthbert's character, from what he had seen in former years, to feel sure that young Glendinning had been more sinned against than

sinning: he quietly turned the conversation into another channel, and the Baronet seemed soon at his ease again. Amongst other questions, he asked Mr. Gordon whether he had seen anything of Mr. Phillips's protégée, Mr. Herbert Grey. He said Mr. Phillips had written to recommend the young man, should he, Sir Arthur, be in want of a private secretary; but, as he never took any interest in the affairs of people of whom he knew nothing, "he had declined the honour, lest Mr. Grey should turn out an impostor, as no doubt he would when he had well fleeced Mr. Phillips." Mr. Gordon, however, spoke warmly in favour of the young stranger, and Sir Arthur said his curiosity was so much aroused, he thought he should have to send for Herbert Grey, to make his acquaintance.

The following day was spent in walking about the beautiful grounds round the Castle, and in examining the rare collection of curiosities in arts, and the fine paintings in the Baronet's possession. Laura's playing and singing enchanted the noble host when he heard her, and, finding herself of consequence, she was quite at her ease. When the mother and daughter met alone together at night, after dismissing their attendants, Mrs. Gordon affectionately kissed her child and said, "Laura, dear, I want to give you a word of advice:—Yesterday you were naturally timid and reserved at finding yourself in such a different position to that you occupy in general; you were ill at ease, because you were in the presence of a stranger; now you are excited and have lost all that timidity, and are in a state



of delight with everything around you, because Sir Arthur has been paying you compliments about your musical talents.' My darling girl, you know my sole wish to make you happy, and *that* you will never be, if you allow external objects to have so much weight with you. I want you to forget self more than you do. Look away from your own accomplishments—your power to charm—and try to fix your thoughts more upon the favour of your Heavenly Friend. By ever keeping Christ in your heart, you will be able to overcome your present uncomfortable shyness, for, when we remember that our promised heavenly possessions, of which by faith we are already partakers, far outweigh the temporary worldly possessions of the rich in this life, we shall not be ashamed to meet any one who may be above us in position, as far as worldly rank or possessions go, but who will be our equals when they have to lay aside their pomp, for death is a leveller. No charming accomplishments or honours of any kind can save us from that, and we are now to fit ourselves for our home hereafter. By constantly keeping our Saviour in view, when we are placed in situations which might tempt us to feel ill at ease, and to look with too little self-possession on ourselves, we shall be reminded of our own promised exalted position. When we feel tempted to go to the other extreme and *unduly* exalt ourselves, then, when more especially we are being flattered, we shall remember how our Master debased Himself; how, far from being flattered, He was mocked and insulted: and if the servant is not above his Lord,

is it following the example he has set us, for us to receive what He did not? My own precious child, you always listen very dutifully to what I say to you, and you know how dearly I love you, and how earnestly I desire to counteract your little failings; now I shall leave you to think over what I have said, merely reminding you, that the more you seek to remember your Saviour, the more will you prove yourself a perfect lady in every way. Nature's true gentle-folk are always found to be Christ's disciples; at least, that is my idea. God bless you, my precious child, and may His choicest blessings rest on you." A loving embrace from Laura was the only response, for she loved her mother too much to despise her kindly given reproofs and instruction; and thus, little by little, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, the noxious weeds were kept under, and would be eventually eradicated. In the peaceful hour of evening, or rather early night, when the cares and pleasures of the day are ended, and we are preparing for our refreshing slumbers, are not our minds, and especially the minds of the young, more impressionable, more ready to receive the gentle word of correction, than at any other time? Such occasions are often made of great service, and parents will never repent the minutes given to gentle words of advice: not when the mind has been embittered by harsh correction for faults committed—for the nature of every young person is peculiarly repugnant to discipline—but in the calm hours, when no previously administered

correction has placed a barrier between parent and child for the time. But when, as in Laura's case, the failings had been constitutional, rather than rebellious from wilfulness, much may be done towards forming the character, by strengthening the weak points, and showing the way to obtain a mastery over others.

The rest of their stay was diversified by the occasional visits of a few neighbours, and excursions to the surrounding neighbourhood. But Mr. Gordon was not idle. He saw much work to be done in the Baronet's own estate, and deeply did he lament that the resident clergyman was not a man to exert much influence for good in the homes of the tenantry, for he was a boon companion of Sir Arthur's, who after the first week or so of the Gordons' stay, had been unable to resist his darling propensity, and had begun again to indulge too freely in his generous wines. The Vicar, who was a most abstemious man, quietly remonstrated with him on one or two occasions, but finding his words had no effect, he absented himself at last from the table as soon as the rest of his family left. The minister of the parish came now regularly every evening, and he and Sir Arthur were not visible again to the rest of the company.

The Gordons naturally began to feel uncomfortable, and to resolve to terminate their visit; but any mention of their intentions made the Baronet so angry, that they were thankful when, at the end of a month or rather less, Mr. Gordon's friend wrote to inform him that a living had been presented to him,

and this would necessitate an immediate removal to the district named. With many thanks, therefore, for his hospitality,—for Sir Arthur had never been known to exert himself so much before to please,—the Gordons took their leave of Glendinning Castle, and right glad were they all to find themselves once more in their own comfortable home, and no one envied the Baronet the possession of those riches, which to him were no source of pleasure, for he was never known to make any but a selfish use of them, and consequently was a stranger to the happiness which ever accompanies a right and liberal dispensing of the treasures committed to our keeping.

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## CHAPTER V.

TIME passed quickly and happily with Herbert Grey. He was interested in his new occupation, and as his evenings were at his own disposal, during the time of Howard's stay in England, Mr. Gordon had begged him to continue his reading with his son. Together they had studied Euclid and algebra, and had read and translated many of the old Greek and Latin poems, and they had derived much pleasure from these studies. One evening, as Mr. Gordon entered the room, they were discussing the merits of some of the English poets. They appealed to the Vicar to decide for them as regarded the nature of Shakespeare's writings, as also those of Sir Walter Scott and Lord Byron; but Mr. Gordon said he must hear their opinions first.

"Well, sir," remarked Herbert, seeing the Vicar expected him to speak, "I think Shakespeare was a wonderful man, for his age, and one who must have done much towards eradicating the follies and the vanities of his time; but, though he shows such a thorough knowledge of mankind, and is majestically grand in his ideas, there are in many of his works a coarseness of expression, which mars the entire beauty of the whole. I think that Shakespeare's works as a whole, are not quite fitted for every society. There are parts which appear like clouds, to mar the beauty of the otherwise stupendously grand collection."

"I think you have touched upon the right point," replied Mr. Gordon, "when you speak of the age in which this wonderful man lived. No doubt, had he been born in these more refined days, he would have expressed many of his ideas in a more elegant form. Many of the phrases employed are almost obsolete. But you must remember that the poet wrote in the style which was most in vogue in those days. Then, he was not of high birth, though of respectable parentage. I have heard people say, that they reckon Shakespeare's writings as next in truth to the Bible; and he shews certainly a wonderful insight into the workings of the heart. It is rather dangerous," laughingly concluded the Vicar, "in these days of Shakesperian revival, to say aught against this extraordinary man: so now, what do you say about Scott, whom you next mentioned?" "My idea about Sir Walter Scott's writings are different I know to those of most people. They are very beautiful, and there is much pathos and depth of feeling in his works; but I do not consider them, as far as regards the poetical portions, as anything very marvellous." "Come, Grey," interrupted Howard Gordon, "I really cannot hear you put in any of your 'buts' about my prince of poets. He is my beau ideal of poetical grandeur, and Laura's beau ideal of perfection as a writer in prose; no *padre caro*, what have you to say about my hero?"

"I must own to a liking for some of Scott's works; and I think he expresses himself in a pretty style; but I believe he does not bear the first place in the ranks

of English poets, though his works are good standard ones, which will ever hold a high position. You are a severe critic, I fear, Herbert. Now, have you been slashing at Lord Byron? Mind, it is to be your unbiassed opinion, though I have laughed at you."

"Well, Mr. Gordon, I fear I am very particular, for I cannot say I do much admire Byron's works. There is a great deal of beauty in his poetry, but it seems to me that there is a something wanting; there is no paucity of ideas; but can we not detect much of the atheist, sir, in his writings; does he not often attribute to Nature itself, as a self-existent power, what is most decidedly the work of God? Is there not too often a *wrong* conclusion drawn by him, from what might be considered as a true and loving correction. He seems to write often in a spirit of bitterness, which makes me think he was at enmity with mankind."

"Well," objected the Vicar, "you may of course find faults in the writings of every one, for we are creatures much influenced by external circumstances, as well as by our thoughts. I believe Byron was not a happy man, either in mind, or in his family. There are so many slanderous reports always eagerly circulated respecting people, of any note especially, that one hardly knows what to believe or reject. Byron had many domestic troubles I believe, and was also afflicted with a slight lameness in one foot; but though I cannot defend such a character, yet still I think it may be, that many of the failings you speak of may be attributed to these causes. I must, however, confess that I feel something

like regret myself, when I peruse the grandly-written works of Byron, for there is so much fascination, to some minds, in the perusal of good poetry, that people are led to read on, and insensibly their feelings are carried away, so that they forget that poison often lurks under the most tempting-looking flowers, and the pernicious destroyer may be so subtilely administered, that it is hard to perceive and trace its effects, until the mischief is done. This is my objection to an indiscriminate reading of poetry, and it may be that Byron would, if too much studied by a thoughtless person, be likely perhaps, as I see you think, to cause the mind to look too much only on Nature, instead of being, from that contemplation, led up to Nature's God. Now, my young friend, I have one suggestion to make,—before reading any work of fiction, ask the guidance of God's Holy Spirit to direct your judgment aright, then may you safely be enabled, in prayerful trust, to hope aright, to glean the treasures from the refuse, and by the good example of others be led to follow their right guidance, and by their errors be warned yourself, lest you also make an occasion for a stumbling-block to others. My taste for poetry is not very great, and some may condemn me for my choice; but I am decidedly in favour of Montgomery and of Cowper. The one writes in a majestic style, peculiarly solemn and grand, and the other with a simplicity and almost childlike pathos, at times, which possesses great charms. I ought, however, to acknowledge, that though I cannot give such a sweeping condemnation against the



other poets, that still I do in a measure agree with you. Now what say you to my choice?"

"I have nothing to say, Mr. Gordon, but that I perfectly agree with you in all you have said, for there is no mistake about the real Christian character of these writers. There is nothing wanting there, sir. I can read their writings without feeling it necessary to be always on my guard, lest I should be led away to admire that which, if expressed in less tempting and flowery language, would shock and insult my feelings."

"When reading any works, however imperfect they may be, my dear Grey, still remember, however, that the writers are only fallible creatures; and be sure, that unless you can bring their teaching, and the doctrines they inculcate, to the only sure test, the teaching and doctrines of the Bible, you may be led astray, even by the best intentioned people, for we are liable to err in our judgments, whenever we trust to our own unaided decisions."

The conversation here dropped by the entrance of a servant, announcing that supper was ready. Herbert Grey was asked to partake of this meal with the family, and he accepted with much pleasure. The Vicar occasionally asked him to remain, and Howard was always pleased when any conversation arose which detained his friend to that hour, as he greatly admired his polished manners when in the society of ladies; and he was planning something in his own mind which he wished to speak about on this special occasion. When they were all seated at table, Howard said: "My time is so

soon drawing now to a close, that I begin to dread the idea of having to leave home ; another month only, and I shall be wending my way to Portsmouth for embarkation. Herbert, old fellow, I know you will miss your pupil, will you come with us—I mean my father and myself—as far as that noted place ? By the bye, I think it is Southampton, not Portsmouth ; but whichever part it is, will you come and see me fairly on board ?” Herbert Grey’s first impulse was a quick and delighted acceptance of the invitation ; but the next minute he said, “ I fear my mother will be lonely without me, for you may chance to be at Southampton for a day or two.” “ If you would care for the little excursion, Mr. Grey,” remarked Mrs. Gordon, “ I think, perhaps, I could persuade your dear mother to come and stay with us for a few days during your absence.”

Herbert warmly thanked Mrs. Gordon, and Howard rewarded her with a grateful look. When the young stranger had departed, she told her son the change might do Mrs. Grey good ; but Howard confided to his sister his wish that Grey should be with his father after he (Howard) sailed for India, where his regiment was to be quartered, as Herbert would help to cheer the Vicar after his loss, while with his mother and Laura, the very exertions they would have to make to entertain their guest, would keep them from giving way too much to sorrow. And so it was arranged ; and Herbert, entering into his friend’s idea, begged his mother as a special favour to comply with their request, by accepting the kind invitation to the Vicarage.

## CHAPTER VI.

MR. PHILLIPS had been writing as usual one morning, and he suddenly laid down his pen and began to ponder deeply upon some evidently difficult subject. Presently he rang the bell, and, on the entrance of the servant, he requested that the housekeeper might be sent up, as he wished to speak to her. A bustling middle-aged woman, of respectable appearance, soon appeared, curtsying, at the door of the study.

“Walk in, Mrs. Ellis, and sit down, please, I want to have a word or two with you. I have been thinking that, perhaps, we could manage to entertain a few friends here. I want to make a little farewell dinner party for Howard Gordon, and—” here Mr. Phillips passed his hand through his hair, and appeared as if lost in conjectures as to how he could possibly entertain them all—“well, I think I could manage it, do not you think so, Ellis?”

“Lor’ bless you, yes, sir; you leave it to me, and I’ll manage it all. Don’t you worry your head about it. Why, we used to have a deal of company to provide for when I lived with the Riversdale family. That was when my Ellis was alive, you know, sir, and he used to say nothing ever put him out so much as to hear people wonder whether I could send up a luncheon, or a dinner, at a half hour’s notice; as if his Sussey couldn’t

give them as good a meal as ever they'd tasted, even if she'd nothing in the house to make it off! But my Ellis was always so proud of me, you see, sir."

"Well, then, Ellis, suppose we arrange about it; there will be Mr. and Mrs. Gordon, Miss Laura, and Mr. Howard; then I want to persuade Mrs. Grey, and of course Mr. Grey will be here, and I rather think I must ask Mr. Jinks, and then—let me see, how many is that?" Mrs. Ellis, who had been keeping count on her fingers, replied, "Seven, and yourself eight, that makes an even number, sir. Did I ever tell you what my Ellis used to say about an uneven number, sir? He was a very popular man in his young days, was my poor John, and he was asked out a good deal into company you see, sir; and to all the weddings in the town he was sure to be invited. Well, he was at a wedding breakfast one day, where there were an uneven number, so that there was a laugh at the young man who was the odd one, because there was not a lady to pair with him; so the guests were saying different things, when presently the bridegroom got up, and he said, 'in proposing the health of this present company, let me add the belief that my friend there (pointing to the odd number) will take good care to provide himself with a companion before he next goes to a wedding, for it seems to me, that this will give him a sickener of single blessedness. My friends, let us drink his health, and long life to himself and his partner when he gets one.' Of course every one laughed at this, and so it was said, that the next wedding would be this young

man's ; and so it was ; and then for fun every wedding afterwards was to have an uneven number. My Ellis had been courting me for some time, and like all young folks I was bashful you see, sir ; and I'd keep on putting off and putting off the day, until my John began to think it was time to make me decide. We were both invited to another wedding, and on the very morning of the day, just before we were to start, in comes my Ellis, and tells me he is very sorry to say that his mother was not at all well, and that he'd take it as the greatest favour that ever was, if I'd go and sit with her a bit, and that then, to make up for the loss of my pleasure, he'd take me to Vauxhall in the evening. I'd often wished to go to these gardens you see, sir, so I went to his mother, who was not very bad after all, but only pretending, as I found out afterwards ; after the wedding, my John didn't stay long, and when we were at Vauxhall, he told me he had been the odd number at the party, (for he had waited till the last), and as every one thought I should be there, of course they had not thought of his tricking them so, for they'd have invited another lady had they known, and then he told me we must be married in the course of a week, or Joe Bradley's wedding would have spoiled the fun, and there was another one coming off soon. I was caught at last, because you see I didn't like to break the sort of rule that was made. But after we were married, it was noticed that whoever was the odd one, *died* first, so of course no one liked that, and so we took care in our town never to sit down to table with an

uneven number again, as it had become unlucky. Well, sir, there's eight then, with yourself."

Mr. Phillips could not help laughing at this ridiculous story, but he wished his housekeeper would expend her volubility on some one else. "We must have a nice dinner, Mrs. Ellis, some fish and soup, and a good joint or two, and some game and poultry, and the ladies will expect some jelly, or something in that way, and I suppose a pudding and a tart; and we must have a real good Stilton, and some biscuits."

"Yes, sir," interrupted Mrs. Ellis, drawing herself up, to look as important as possible, "I shall see that you have a suitable dinner, if you leave it with me. My Ellis used to tell a funny tale about a man who was a gardener, quite an uneducated fellow, who was had in occasionally, when there was any extra grass-mowing to be done at Lord Riversdale's; and my Ellis, he was butler there at the time, after we were married, and he was at the dinner-table one day, when this man came in, and my Ellis was a very polite man, and he offered everything to this fellow as if he was his equal; and when the second course came on, for we always had two courses at least in the kitchen; my John offered this man some fruit tart;—'no thank ye,' said he, 'no sour fruit for me.' My Ellis stared at him, and asked what he meant, for he knew that I always put plenty of sugar into my fruit pasties; and I was out of the room at the time, so he couldn't appeal to me. 'Well, then, what do you say a thing is sour for, if it isn't? you asked me if I'd have some fruit tart: I'd rather have

fruit sweet, instead of *tart*.' How my Ellis laughed at him, to be sure."

Poor Mr. Phillips mentally ejaculated that there was a skeleton in every man's house, and Mrs. Ellis's tongue was *his* skeleton. He seldom indulged her with an opportunity for displaying her talents, but on the present, as on previous occasions, the housekeeper found, that the reminiscences of the late John Ellis had had the desired effect, and Mr. Phillips was only too glad to get her out of the room, by allowing her to arrange everything for him. "Master is a gem of a man," Mrs. Ellis remarked to her companions downstairs, "but he spoils himself when he begins talking about household matters. There is little fear of my bringing any discredit on his knowledge of what is right for the entertainment of visitors; for, as long as he gives me the necessary means, I shall take good care to cater well for him. It would be a queer day that would see Master anything niggardly; I don't think there's a more liberal man breathing; but then I like to keep in my own position, and see him keep in his."

Mrs. Ellis was true to her promise, and a very nice little entertainment she provided. The guests were all agreeably pleased with the polite attentions of their host, and each one strove to make the evening pass off as merrily as possible. Mr. Phillips had always felt a sort of paternal interest in the young Gordons, and especially in Laura, who was much attached to him. With feelings of great curiosity he watched the evident

marks of admiration expressed in Herbert Grey's countenance whenever Laura was speaking; and he also frequently had noticed, how of late, the young man had cared more for being in the vicinity of his own home whenever Miss Gordon was with his mother, so that he might chance to be able to escort her back to the Vicarage; and now Mr. Phillips determined to see if possible whether this liking was mutual. He had the greatest opinion of Herbert, and he concluded in his own mind that it would not be an unsuitable match, in point of birth and in future position; for Mr. Phillips had agreed with himself that should Laura favour the young man, he should in due time lend them a helping hand by advancing the interests of his young friend still more, by offering to adopt him as his own son. The bachelor, it must be confessed, had lately been consulting much with himself as to the advisability of giving himself a true right to the adoption of Herbert Grey, by laying his fortune and his heart (at least he thought that might follow) at the feet of Mrs. Grey, and begging her to make his home her own also. But, as yet, the lady had not given him sufficient encouragement, as far as his own prospects were concerned, for he could not flatter himself that the warmth of her manner arose from anything but gratitude towards him for his kindness to her son, and Mr. Phillips was a cautious man.

He believed that Laura was not *decidedly* in love with Herbert, for she looked quite indifferent when he approached her before others, but could he have seen



into the secrets of that heart which, though kept in strict order, yet beat quicker whenever her lover spoke to her, he might have judged differently.

On this particular evening, when something was said about Herbert's leave of absence for a day or two, and Mr. Phillips told him that his expenses were to be considered as paid already, for if he would take a holiday for a few weeks, it should cost him nothing, as that was the only condition on which his master would part with him, Laura gave Mr. Phillips such a look, so brimful of gratitude, the poor man could hardly resist thanking her for it. Later in the evening he overheard a whispered conversation, in which Herbert had been asking whether she would advise him to stay away, and the young lady had replied, "Oh, I shall miss you so much, but then it may do you good."

This determined Mr. Phillips, and now his resolve was taken, and Herbert's position should be no bar to a marriage between them. Of course caution must be observed on the subject, but he knew enough of Herbert's character to be sure, that unless he soon made the young man aware of his intentions, Mr. Grey would not dare to offer himself to Laura, with the prospect of such a poor home as he could offer her for the present; but Laura's feelings were certainly involved in some degree, and she should not be made unhappy.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE day had come and passed away, and other days had shared the same fate, since Howard Gordon embarked on board the *Vulcan*, bound for India. Who but the mother can fathom the depth of her grief, when parting, for the first time, with her own, and only son, when that son has been the joy and darling of her heart, the comfort and hope of her life. Such had Howard Gordon been to his mother. Her grief was too deep for expression ; but she loved well, and whatever she thought would please her son, that would, after the first trial was over, please her. Mr. Gordon loved his boy none the less dearly, but a man's feelings are different to a woman's. He had felt for years that the day must come, when it was naturally to be expected that his son must leave his home, and mingle in far different scenes. He missed Howard very much, but he felt only a manly and natural grief. He had chosen a fine profession, was likely soon to be promoted, and it was almost with a paternal *pride* that the father bade his son adieu. He knew that Howard's path would be a dangerous and difficult one, as a Christian, for his comrades would surely tempt him to evil of some kind, and therefore the Vicar had of late sought to warn him of some of the difficulties he would have to contend

against, and many were the beseeching prayers which were offered up on his behalf by his loving parents. Mrs. Gordon trusted to the good and religious training Howard had had, to keep him in the narrow way; but the Vicar trusted simply in the over-ruling care of a merciful Providence, and he thought little of the promises the young man made when bidding his home and family farewell.

It is a parent's duty to warn and to exhort; and it is the duty of every one manfully to fight under all difficulties; but how sadly true is it that we are taught resistance, more especially by painful *experience*, than by a milder course of training. Too often, when most we feel our own hearts revolting against the idea of any crime, which we abhor in others, do we find ourselves subjected to that temptation which may have led others astray; but do we flee away from the first suggestion of Satan, and by the warning voice of others escape the snare which was set for us? Do we not rather feel so secure in the idea of our own integrity, that we fancy no harm can happen to us, even were we to tamper with the enemy. And being thus self-satisfied, do we not throw down the gauntlet as it were to our unseen but ever present foe, that "Old Serpent, the Devil," who delights in proving what an easy thing it is for him to conquer men? But ask for the assistance of the Captain of our Salvation, who ever stands with His army drawn up in battle array, to fight for His people, and we have only to leave our cause in His hands; the foe retires vanquished, without having

struck one blow. On our trustfulness in God rests our power then to resist sin, not in ourselves.

Howard Gordon had been well instructed, well warned, therefore well armed; but as yet he had, like David with Saul's armour, not *proved* it. There is such a thing as a religion gained by habit,—by early associations,—but when the individual is removed from the atmosphere to which he has been accustomed; and when away from the guiding hand and warning voice, he has to stand alone, then comes the true test. There is a religion which arises from conviction of our own utter unworthiness, and our constant need of a help, higher and more lasting than that of our fellow creatures: and this *heart* religion it was that young Gordon needed. He had made a fair show as yet, while in the quiet home of his early days, but we shall see how he stood when temptations assailed him; when, left to his own guidance, he had to brave the sneers and jokes of his comrades, and to try the strength which he had boasted he possessed. But think not, my dear readers, that the prayers offered for him were of no avail. The good seed so carefully sown, and so tenderly nourished, was to blossom in abundance, when all the tares had been weeded out by the skilful hand of the husbandman; and the fire was but allowed to rage for awhile on earth, so that the pure metal might remain, to shine more brightly in the future, and to save from the endless fire hereafter.

All this passed through the mind of the father in after years, and even at the time he felt that there was mercy mingling with the judgment.

The ship *Vulcan* was not a transport vessel, but had been destined to carry Howard Gordon, with some of the officers and men of his regiment, to India, as it was proceeding thither with only a small number of passengers, and a tolerable cargo of calico and printed cotton goods. It was a sailing vessel of good size, and with comfortable accommodation. The captain was, to all outward appearance, a very respectable man; but no sooner was his vessel fairly out to sea, than Howard began to be alarmed at his evil propensities. Drinking, swearing, gambling, and too often cheating, were found to be among his accomplishments, and unfortunately he seemed determined to try and teach our young friend to follow his example. There were two or three junior officers on board, and the Captain enjoyed the so-called fun of seeing them making game of Howard's shocked expressions, when they uttered their ribald jokes. Smoking, drinking, and card-playing were the usual evening's amusements in the part of the vessel in which the young men were quartered. The lieutenant under whose care they were placed, was himself an indolent sort of character, who would not trouble himself with the behaviour of his subalterns, so long as they kept within the limits of the army-conduct regulations, therefore it was vain for young Gordon to appeal to him. Howard was surprised to see the captain commence his meals without even once a day asking a blessing on the good cheer provided; and though at first he made it a constant rule to utter a mental ejaculation, the others would guess how he was

engaged, and would make some mocking remark. By degrees Howard gave this practice up. He forgot that if our Saviour set us an example, by looking up to Heaven before He blessed the bread, which He afterwards brake, that it is doubly necessary for *us* to ask for a blessing. Next, he began by small degrees to feel less displeasure when the name of God was taken in vain, or when profane jests were made about holy things. The captain would occasionally invite Howard to his cabin of an evening, but for a long time he had resisted, for it was in the still hours of evening that thoughts of home would come to his mind, and new resolutions be formed to resist evil; but unhappily these good resolves would not last long; with returning light, the new associates would gain fresh power.

One day young Gordon was writing to his parents, and he described to them the scene of which he had been made the victim when crossing the line. The sailors had heard that this was his first voyage, so they determined to have their licensed fun, and accordingly, engaging the cornet in an animated discussion about some of their previous passages to India, he suddenly found himself bound up in a sail-cloth, and thrown over the side of the vessel into a small boat, where he was unrolled, and perceived a monstrous looking fellow dressed to represent the god Neptune, who, growling in a fierce voice, demanded an instant payment of a good sum, to be divided amongst the men for grog. Howard was perplexed, and finally was very angry at this outrage, and protested against such behaviour.

At a sign from Neptune, the men who held the sail-cloth quickly rolled him up, and in another instant Howard felt himself hoisted up, and then let down into the sea. The shock was so great he could not scream, and when brought back into the boat, he was threatened with another and a longer ducking if he did not comply. Fortunately for him a crowd had of course collected, and some of the passengers explained to him that it was customary to pay tribute to Neptune the first time you were known to have crossed the line. Of course this put things in a different light, and laughing heartily, young Gordon paid the penalty, much to the satisfaction of the crew.

This was the only letter he wrote on board, as, being detected in the act, he had been laughed at by some of the young men, who pretended to believe that he was writing love letters, and the captain of the vessel, ever ready "to take the pride out of the *Parson's son*," as he termed Howard, was foremost in quizzing him, and called for a dozen of champagne, to be drunk at young Gordon's expense, unless he told them the name of his lady-love. It was vain for Howard to protest against their absurd notions; "no one in their senses," they told him, would write such long letters to their parents; so the wine was had, and Howard would have to pay for it. Seeing that he would be wise to join in the joke, he now pretended to enjoy the fun, and as he took it so good-naturedly, even the captain was half sorry, and promised to help him in getting up a subscription for the payment of the wine. This

was agreed to by the others, but the young man was led to indulge too freely in the consumption of it, and when the captain dared him to play a game of *rouge et noir* in his cabin that evening, with some of the others, Howard gave a reply, which in former days would have horrified himself. He went, and at first he refused to play for money, but, as game after game was played, and the company was well supplied with hot grog, his scruples began to abate, and the captain pushing some money towards him, it was made use of. The party were invited for the following evening, and young Gordon was made to promise also. The next morning Howard felt ill and unhappy, and with a heavy heart prepared for deck parade, in the consciousness that he had humbled himself as no Christian ought to have done. Unhappily, he seemed to have forgotten that, had he but sought for it, pardon would immediately have been granted, and peace would follow. He had been laughed at by his comrades, and rather than meekly bear their taunts, he had fancied his prayers could be offered while he was dressing, or preparing for his night's rest. Unfortunately, no longer having a rule, he soon forgot that he had not asked for pardon and help, and so, little by little, was Howard Gordon, led from the right and narrow way, and now learnt to forget the peace and happiness which had been his. There were one or two of the young men, who had pitied Howard, but with the sanction of the Captain, how could they help him much; and there were also some of the passengers, who would have given him assistance



had he spoken to them of his troubles. But they had seen enough of Captain Tenby's conduct to feel sure that he was not a proper person to be in command of a vessel, as he was quite unfitted after dusk to perform his duties as Captain, which he delegated to the first mate, who, being a more gentlemanly man, had been requested by the passengers to preside at their table, instead of Mr. Tenby, who had been glad of the excuse, which allowed him at liberty to join the young officers. The Lieutenant had been in the habit of retiring to his own cabin, immediately his duties were over for the day, and partook of his meals there.

When the vessel arrived in India, much to the dismay of the officers and men, a telegram was conveyed from the Commander-in-chief, ordering them to embark on board a transport bound for Australia, whither the troops were then on their way. It was a tedious voyage, and unhappily for Howard, though removed from the vile companionship of Captain Tenby, he found himself not much better off, and he delayed his reformation until he should be on *terra firma* once more. On this vessel was a lad about ten years of age, who took a great fancy to Howard Gordon, from his kindness to him on one or two occasions, when he found the child crying, having been beaten by the cook and his mate, for not having done all their work before he had touched a morsel of food. Often the boy would have gone a whole day without a meal, had not Howard kept watch, and insisted on the lad's rations being given regularly. When the tedious voyage was at length ended, this boy ab-

scended from the vessel, and when Howard and the others had reported themselves to their commanding officer, to their amazement they found this boy, Jack, in their train.

The Colonel was so struck with the boy's devotion to his young benefactor, and so pitied his forlorn appearance, that he ordered the lad to make himself as useful in the regiment as he could, and then he should remain. Jack always considered himself as Howard's young servant, and a faithful one he proved himself.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

MRS. GREY had been of much service to her friends at the Vicarage, for she had helped to cheer them; and being a guest in their house, they had of course to exert themselves to please her; she in return had sought to enliven them in every way, and the change had done her much good, as in thinking over the troubles of others she had in a measure forgotten her own. She looked upon Laura with much affection, as she had assisted in her education for a time, and she was almost as pleased to see the improving state of her pupil's mind, in every way, as was Mrs. Gordon. It was always her wish to see Laura well and happily married, when she was a year or so older, as she feared that her son might be tempted to fall in love with the young lady, for so well had Herbert guarded his secret adoration, that poor Mrs. Grey thought he was, as yet, safe from the fascination. Had her son's prospects been equal to Laura's, there would have been nothing which could have pleased her more; as it was, she dreaded such a calamity.

At the end of a fortnight the young man returned, and with many thanks to their kind friends, Mrs. Grey took leave of them, not, however, to return to her late wretchedly poor lodgings. Mrs. Gordon had been let into the secret, and had ordered a

carriage to convey the lady home, and insisted upon accompanying her thither. All sense of shame about her honest poverty had left Mrs. Grey now, for she felt such confidence in her friends, that she knew they loved her as much as if living in a grand mansion; she therefore smilingly promised to offer them the best accommodation she could, if they would drink tea with her. The ladies were deep in conversation, and Mrs. Grey did not notice that they had passed their old quarters, and she started when Mrs. Gordon, laying her hand on her friend's arm, said, "Herbert is home before you, he is early to-day." At the door of a pretty little cottage, whose porch was clustered over with roses and honeysuckle, stood Herbert Grey, his handsome countenance lighted up with a beaming smile, and advancing, with outstretched arms, he embraced his mother as she mechanically stepped from the carriage. "Welcome, dearest mother," he whispered, as he kissed her, "welcome to your new home. I was as much astonished as you are when I found all our things removed from old Mrs. Peters's, and was directed to apply here for information, where a letter directed 'Herbert Grey, Esq., Rose Cottage,' contained the intelligence that our kind and noble friend, Mr. Phillips, begged my acceptance of the leasehold of this cottage, and the use of the furniture it contained. He wrote so nicely, do you know mother, that I could not feel offended in any way, or take it as a very great favour. He told me that he was an eccentric being, and not having any near relatives, he should esteem it

as a favour on my part, if I would allow him to have his own way and treat me as his son. If I would do this, he said, I should make him a happy man, and give him some real object of interest apart from himself. Then he said a few words about yourself—but there is a letter for you.”

Herbert Grey had been walking his mother up and down the little front garden, during this conversation, and as he finished speaking he was about to lead her into the house, when she suddenly remembered that Mrs. Gordon had been left in the carriage, and that she had not wished her good-bye. “She told me to tell you, that she would call during the evening and have your promised cup of tea,” replied Herbert, “so come in now, dear mother, as she will not be very long, and I want you to see our home first.”

Mr. Phillips’s letter, contained a sort of pleading apology for the liberty he had taken, and a hint, that as Herbert would soon become a junior partner in the firm, —as he, Mr. Phillips, wished to retire from the profession in the course of a few years, and by appointing Herbert, as the future successor, he would ensure a good business, —as the young man bade fair to be a proficient in the law, he should like to see his future partner in comfortable circumstances, as, with his salary, he might be able to provide for the wants of his limited household. A neat young servant-girl, was busily engaged in setting the table for tea, when Mrs. Grey entered the cheerful little parlour, which, together with the other apartments in the cottage, was tastefully, though simply, furnished.

The poor lady was overcome with emotion and gratitude, and she retired to her room to collect her thoughts, so taken by surprise was she. When Herbert thought she had been alone long enough, he went up to her apartment, and knocking, obtained admittance, when to her dismay, he told her Mr. Phillips would join them at tea. It proved a wise plan however, as that gentleman, in his hearty off-hand manner, soon made her feel quite at her ease, and a pleasant hour was spent before he rose to take leave, and offered to escort Mrs. Gordon home. The first dreaded meeting, after his kindness, over, Mrs. Grey always hailed the visits of their benefactor, as she saw how much interest he took in her son. Months passed on, but Mr. Phillips was still only the kind friend, and every one was pleased to see his growing interest in Herbert, overcoming his love for his own society.

Herbert was deeply in love with Laura; but as yet he had not openly declared his sentiments: but when two young people love each other, they have a sort of freemasonry of thought which seems to bind one to the other, as effectually as if the bond of a recognised engagement existed between them. He scarcely dared to question his own heart; he felt that Laura was all in all to him, and yet until he had completed his term of apprenticeship, and was taken into partnership, which Mr. Phillips had hinted should be at the expiration of that time, he felt that he must not confess his love, yet he was certain that she, he prized so dearly, would be true to him. He had no misgivings on that score. But

what if her parents should object to her marrying a man, who might be said to be almost living on charity, for he had no claim on Mr. Phillips for the payment of any salary until his term was ended,—the idea was maddening to him ! Then came the thought that if happiness was to be his, it would surely come ; he resolved to rest patiently awhile, till he had a fair prospect of a comfortable independence to offer.

Laura had been delighted with the cottage, and had suggested various little fanciful ornaments for the house and garden, which Herbert could employ his leisure time in making. How eagerly the young man had watched her light figure, as it glided about his little home, and how he longed to have asked her, if she would be its honoured mistress ; but though his tongue was silent, his eyes had been eloquent in their language, and he had been understood and answered. He felt no doubt of the fact that the lovely girl would be quite contented to share his humble cottage, and for the rest he would wait.

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With deep regret the Gordons perceived, that though surrounded with so many luxuries, to which for years she had been a stranger, Mrs. Grey was far from happy. She appeared to feel her dependent position, even though so deeply grateful for the manner in which Mr. Phillips always seemed to ignore the fact of his having done more for them than Herbert's services deserved, so they resolved to assist her wishes ; and at length they succeeded in recommending two or three

young lady pupils to her, that under her guidance they might receive the finishing stroke to their education. The lady was well qualified for this, as she was a proficient in all accomplishments. By this means she found herself able to add a nice sum to their house-keeping, and have what to her was an agreeable distraction. Her health was never very good, and her earlier troubles seemed to weigh much, at times, upon her spirits. The good Vicar would often walk down to see her of an evening, for, finding her most depressed at those times when her son was absent from her, as he occasionally found employment as assistant book-keeper to some of the large firms in the town, or procured a temporary situation as evening tutor to young men, he was anxious to cheer her as much as possible. Sometimes her mind would wander back to the past, and she would speak of events which made Mr. Gordon more than ever sure that she must indeed have fallen from a high position, and that through no fault of her own. There was always a slight reserve apparent in her manner, which kept her friends from touching unbidden on her past history, and it was seldom that she mentioned anything relating to her late husband.


The Vicar had been of much help to her, in leading her mind to the contemplation of trials, as sent in mercy and not in wrath, as *helps* to us in our life of warfare: for were we to have no sorrows we might be tempted to forget our constant need of assistance from our Heavenly Friend. "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the



world." This, as Mr. Gordon reminded her, was spoken by our blessed Lord to His friends, not to His enemies; and what Christian is there, who has lived many years in the world without passing through the deep waters? and can they not all subscribe to the truth of that promise, "Lo, I am with you always?" And again, "When thou passest through the deep waters they shall not overwhelm thee"?

Trials are proofs of God's love, for through the dark cloud the sun is already appearing, and will shine the more brightly afterwards, when that cloud has passed away. There is a peace so peculiarly belonging to our Saviour, even the peace which He gave as His parting legacy, that it is well worth the agony we have to endure for a night, in order to be able to enjoy the peace that cometh in the morning. Thus reasoned our good friend, and many an anxious and wavering heart had he strengthened besides that of Mrs. Grey's, by the simple child-like dependence which he ever preached and practised towards his Heavenly Father.

One great point which he was anxious to impress upon the minds of his flock was this: "that true religion consists not so much in external forms and in excitement of feeling, but in the indwelling nature of its existence; so that all our actions, our spontaneous thoughts and wishes, should be so deeply imbued with pure religious principles, that under every circumstance our light may so shine before men, that they may glorify our Father in heaven; and unless our profession is sincere, there cannot be a constant spirit of charity



pervading our lives. We all have much need for careful self-examination. We should try ourselves by every true test, for we are creatures full of vanity, and are soon apt to be led astray by flattery; and by exciting our feelings into a state of religious zeal, we fancy ourselves excellent Christians. 'What think ye of Christ?' is a solemn question, which might well serve as an unfailing test, whereby to gauge our daily experiences. By this question, if we deal fairly with ourselves, we shall soon perceive with *how* much truth we could answer, if the question of our Lord to St. Peter had been put to us: 'Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.' External objects will of course exercise an influence over our feelings, when harassed and tormented by the cares of this life; if we are really Christians we shall yet, amidst the confusion, be ever looking upwards by faith; when racked with pain, we shall yet glorify our God by our patient submission; and remember that, perhaps, more especially at those times when tried and tempted so sorely, we are bearing the visible sign of the cross, and our behaviour is being marked by those about us, who may be resolved to judge us by our conduct under this or that dispensation; and who can tell what a good effect the simple, unwaveringly Christian character, may have upon the ungodly. *That* religion can bear no trial which is founded simply on excitement, or the natural good qualities inborn in the individual. We must have an every-day religion, one which on account of its genuineness will not fear the risk of exposure. It is not neces-

sary to be able to tell the day or the hour of our true conversion,—I much doubt if it be possible; and I warn those who can point to any particular moment, (unless as in St. Paul's case it be wrought by a special miracle,) when they suddenly felt themselves converted from a state of wrath to one of safety and perfect reconciliation with God; for are we not told, 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' A particular text may strike us, and when we had gone into the house of God to mock, we might have been made, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to remain to pray; yet these cases are exceptional, for generally the workings of grace are so gradual in our hearts, that it is almost impossible to fix on any particular time. It is sufficient, if with simple faith we can exclaim, 'One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.'"

Thus spoke and thus acted the good Pastor of Leabridge; and while preaching fortitude and submission to others, little did he think of the need there was for proving the sincerity of his doctrines, by practising them in his own case.

Another special point with him, was to guard against undue prejudices of any kind. When he heard people idly making a mock of minor observances, he would quietly argue the subject with them, and generally succeeded in making them feel how foolish had been their objections, which, the more candid of his listeners frankly informed him, had arisen from inherited preju-

dices ; and not having taken the trouble to investigate the matter for themselves, they had accepted as truth, and I might add almost as religious principles, those ideas which had been instilled into their minds from infancy. "There was of course," as the Vicar informed them, "respect due to the opinions of our parents and guardians ; but in matters of faith, it behoves us to search for ourselves, and not to peril the welfare of our immortal souls by blindly answering, that what has served for our parents, will also serve to guide ourselves. Each one must search for himself, or herself, or shall we not render ourselves liable to the condemnation of that servant, who hid his Lord's talent in a napkin, instead of trading with it ?"

May I be excused for touching upon one or two points which in these days of scepticism, may, by coming in this form, be less unpalatable to the general reader, and may, I humbly trust by God's mercy, serve to lead some to the right understanding of one or two minor points, which I am well aware give offence to the minds of the weak believer, the babe in Christ, as well as perhaps to some of the more advanced. It may be with some, as it was with the writer, that it has been found that prejudices had taken firm root, not from a supposed conviction of their errors, but simply from not being aware on what grounds their authority rested, and also from following the suggestions instilled by teachers. May I then be pardoned for intruding into these pages, a few more of Mr. Gordon's remarks, and request those of my kind and patient readers, who have waded thus

far through my work, to accompany me to the Vicar's school-room, one Wednesday evening, when he is as usual giving a lecture on various points, which he has during the week, (counting from the previous Wednesday,) been requested to touch upon. It was one of his plans, by which he sought to encourage a lawful enquiry into various matters connected with our faith, and by affording an opportunity to all classes, to put forward any subject which they might wish to have explained, he made a most profitable and agreeable entertainment for the benefit of his people. The questions, with the person's ideas on the subject, were written on a slip of paper, which bore no signature, and which was slipped into a box, placed for that purpose in the school-room door, in the same style as a letter box, and of which the Vicar had the key. All the papers must be dated, and must be put in before the Sunday previous to that on which they would be discussed. According to priority of date, if too many were inserted, they were taken, the question being read but not the rest of the paper; the Vicar in the course of his explanations, touching upon these ideas, which would of course answer the individual who had started them as effectually as if given verbatim. All classes would attend, and the clergyman specially encouraged the attendance of the younger members of his congregation.

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## CHAPTER IX.

As the clock chimed the half hour after seven o'clock, one Wednesday evening, Mr. Gordon took his position on a small platform in the spacious and well ventilated schoolroom. His wife and Laura were also present, and a tolerably crowded room it was, and happy faces greeted the pastor on his entrance. The Wednesday evening lectures had now continued for some time, and with growing interest, as it was generally noticed that at the usual service held on Thursday evenings in the church, the Vicar would employ one of the subjects which might be headed with a suitable text as the matter of his sermon, and this specially gratified the poorer classes; on his entrance he bowed slightly to the assembled audience, and the proceedings commenced with a short prayer for a blessing on their meeting, and as usual the Vicar reminded the listeners that, on their return home, they must search the Scriptures in a spirit of prayer; and if the words he had spoken agreed with that unerring teaching, then must they follow up the suggestions he had hinted at, and confess before all, by their adherence to these truths, that they had not studied in vain.

“Now, my friends, I shall introduce, first of all, to the special notice of each individual present, the much and fully discussed subject, of the difference between high and low church. What is the difference between

high and low church views, and which is the most apostolic in its character? This is our first question for discussion, and I am truly glad to have an opportunity for speaking on this matter, for it grieves me to see so much party spirit exhibited in a church which ought to be professedly one. Now I would first of all ask you to enquire, each one for himself, or herself,—Do I profess to be a member of the Church established in these realms? If so, what constitutes my membership? In legal matters I am bound, as a dweller in this country, to abide by the laws made and recognized for the preservation and welfare of the nation. Those laws are framed in a spirit of accordance with God's holy laws; and, in difficult questions, do we not more especially search out the opinions and decisions of the most learned; and the *antiquity* of their judgment, seems also to bear much weight in their favour. Now, my dear friends, why should we have one rule for legal government, and another for our spiritual. Thanks be to God, He has not left us in doubt on either point.

"If our lawgivers could frame good and just laws, from the study of the Bible, how much more can our open Bible supply us with guidance for our *spiritual* laws. We have a book of prayers, compiled by some of the most learned and pious men of their time; it was written by them during the peaceful reign of a most Christian king,—I allude to Edward VI.—whose veneration for the Bible was so great, that on one occasion we read, that seeing a young friend of his thoughtlessly making use of a copy of the Scriptures to stand

upon, in order to reach up to a shelf, the King re-proved him, and, reverently kissing the sacred volume, restored it to its original safe position. In his reign, then, this wonderful Book was compiled, or certainly was revised, and was proved to be purely doctrinal in its views. It was founded on the apostolic injunction, 'Let all things be done decently and in order'; and it was also founded on the apostolic teaching, handed down by successive generations. Abuses had largely crept into the simple Christianity they taught, and with a view to the preservation of the truth, this Book, (which has since undergone but few simple changes) was framed so that there might be less fear of innovations. Now if we profess to be members of the Church of England, of course we must hold ourselves as bound to agree to her laws; but when we speak of high and low church, are we proving ourselves her *true* followers? If we accept her teaching, we must not take only those parts which suit our tastes, but we must take the whole of the laws, and abide by them, or else we do not belong to the *Established Church*. Schisms have always prevailed in the visible Church of Christ, even in the days of the Apostles; for does not St. Paul reprove the Corinthians for their divisions: 'For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? \* \* \* \* \* for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' Then he goes on to say, that every man's work shall be tried, and if his work abide, which he hath built upon his faith, he shall



be saved ; and, 'if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss ; but he himself shall be saved : yet so as by fire.' This I believe to signify, when taken in connection with the rest of the chapter, that all the useless practices which have crept in, to the abuse of the religion our Saviour instituted, are hateful in His eyes : and those who accept such false doctrines, shall be saved only for their trust in Jesus as their Saviour, and shall suffer the loss of all the comfort and happiness a purer religion would have brought them, and also have the consciousness that their salvation had been a difficult matter, but for this ray of faith which was able to save them, causing them to be as brands plucked from the burning. If in our Bible we read such texts as these, 'Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ. Now I pray you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the *ordinances*, as I delivered them to you.' 'Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which ye also have received, and wherein ye stand ; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain.' If we read these they are peculiarly significant, and to my mind (and I think you will all agree with me) they bear much upon our present subject. If St. Paul had given his Corinthian converts rules for their spiritual guidance, and if he tells them that those doctrines shall save them, unless they believed in vain, does it not behove us, as followers of Christ, and of His apostles, to enquire into those doctrines, and to seek to be con-

formed to His Church, by following in the teaching of those holy men of old, who were personally instructed by Christ Himself.

In these days we are still further removed from the chance of inquiring into the minutiae of the apostolic teaching, and therefore we should be more than ever particular in our alterations, and remember, that when our Church was purified from all the abuses which Rome had introduced, (those traditions of men, which had clouded and obscured the light of Gospel truth to such an extent that it was difficult to sift the tares from the wheat,) then, every means were employed to search out, and to remodel our doctrines and our observances, by the teaching which had been handed down to other generations by the apostles; and I might here remark that it is believed to have been St. Paul himself who first preached the glad tidings of salvation on our shores. Therefore in the earlier ages, it follows as a matter of course that the traditions were purer than they would be now as regards spiritual matters, and the Church of England at the Reformation brought back the simple religion of the Apostles; and in order to prevent the recurrence of such a sadly degenerate period in the Church's history, the Reformers wisely compiled the Book of Common Prayer; and it was at a time when they had the power of searching so thoroughly into the truth, and of learning the ancient practices of the primitive Church, that our beautiful Liturgy was written, and has been for years and years, the admiration and comfort of thousands and millions of our countrymen.

“But to return more closely to my subject, after feebly attempting to prove to the satisfaction of some, at least, of you, I trust, the principles on which our Book of Common Prayer was written, I will again ask you how, if professedly calling yourselves members of the Established Church, which gives forth this manual as its rule for the observances of holy and becoming worship, how can you be a faithful member, if you hold only to some of its teaching, and denounce as almost heretical, those who would seek to carry out *all* its rules? I would beg of you all to take this book, and compare its teaching with the word of God, and where in doctrinal points it is opposed, then reject those parts, and not only those, but the whole of its contents, which are not written in the actual Bible words : for if anything it teaches is opposed to the Gospel, it must be a false teacher ; but if on the other hand, as will prove to be the case, you find all its doctrines perfectly true, then you must accept it, and remember that the *rules* laid down for the celebration of Divine services, are evidently the traditional rules of the primitive Church, and therefore are not to be despised, as they have apostolic teaching and usage for their observance. If we do not take the Church Service as a whole, we are not actually members of the Church of England, for we dissent from her doctrines : we hold opinions adverse to her teaching, adverse to the Apostles’ teaching, and therefore we are dissenters. Now take the much abused service of Baptism : our Church teaches us that Baptism is *Regeneration* ; it is a being born again, of water and of the Holy

Spirit ; yet how many thousands of professing members of the Church of England deny the truth of this doctrine. If they do not believe Regeneration to be synonymous with Baptism, then they *dissent* from the plain doctrine of their Church. Ministers of our Established Church, who perhaps weekly have to use this service of Baptism, are, by administering it, professing to uphold its teaching ; and yet how very many there are who deny, both in speaking and in writing, their belief in its truth. If the 'Baptismal service' is prayerfully studied, we can have no hesitation in pronouncing immediately, that the Church of England teaches us that Regeneration is the being renewed by the mystical washing away of sin (original inborn sin) in the Sacrament of Baptism. If during the Jewish dispensation no male infant was to be left uncircumcised, and that soul was to be cut off from his people who had disobeyed the command, is not the inference clear, that, as the Sacrament of Baptism is instituted in its stead, its benefits must be as great, if not greater, than that of circumcision ; for we gained instead of losing, by the change from the Mosaic to the Christian dispensation. At Baptism the sin, which as Adam's descendants we all inherit, is washed away, and it is the seed-time, or the time in which the Holy Ghost is implanted in our hearts, and therefore is it called the 'Baptism of the Holy Ghost,' as you perceive if you turn to St. Paul's question, in Acts xix. 2—7. It is through the frailty of our nature that we need a constant renewal of the Holy Spirit ; and it is beautifully expressive of the true nature of Baptism

if we turn to Titus iii., where we read thus : 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the *washing* of *Regeneration*, and *renewing* of the Holy Ghost.' Now, my friends, if the teaching of our Church was wrong, how is this passage to be understood? It would have no meaning.

"I have enlarged so much upon this point, because, in these days, it is brought forward as the sign of the so-called 'High Church' professors. But have I not shown how our Church distinctly *teaches* this doctrine, and, therefore, those are true members of it who follow her doctrines, and who hold by the laws they have to obey; those who profess to disbelieve this simple truth, cannot, as far as the clergy are concerned, (for they take an oath that they believe the teaching of the Common Prayer Book to be scriptural, and subscribe themselves as willing to follow its guidance,) be conscientiously classed among the members of the Established Church, for they falsify it, by holding contrary opinions; and have they not but very recently been called in question by a noted Dissenter for this very cause. I would therefore say, that were we to drop these paltry distinctions, and remember that an united Church, cannot be divided into sections, such as high, low, or broad Church, we should be far happier, and would we all remember that as members of the Established Church, we ought to obey *all* its teaching, I think you will say that who bear the appellation of 'High' are the most apostolical in their views."

“I would add a few words more about the objections raised against this party, for turning towards the *east* when repeating our articles of belief. In the Old Testament days, we read that Daniel prayed, looking towards Jerusalem. The Messiah was expected from the east, and Jesus himself when on earth prayed in the temple at Jerusalem; and when expressing our belief in him as our God, our Redeemer, and our Sanctifier, it is a beautiful idea to turn our faces towards the east, from whence he has once come, and from whence we look for him a second time. It was the custom of the ancients I am told, to turn towards the east, and unsheath their swords, to prove their readiness to fight for the faith, if required. This then is not an error of Romish fabrication, but a glimmering of ancient customs, and therefore we may well suppose, the custom of the apostles themselves. The use of coloured vestments, and covers of various hues for the communion table, and the decoration of churches with flowers and banners, are I believe modern innovations, and it would perhaps be well to distinguish between those clergy and laity who take ultra views, which are not authorised in our Rubric, and those who simply hold to the laws of that Church, whose members they are. It is greatly to be regretted that these foolish denominations should exercise so great a control over the minds of people in the present day, as they are calculated to do much mischief. There is a spirit of liberality wanting, towards those who differ with us, and though there seems to be an effort making towards the revival of life in our

services, it is lamentable to see the drowsy state of our religion.

“My friends I thank you much for your kind attention, I have but thrown out a few brief and imperfect hints on this subject; I wish not to cause you to rest satisfied with my words, but to make you consider and study for yourselves. Do not drop the matter as worthless. We all have to give an account to God for our talents, and *thought* is a great treasure; the power of thinking and being able to reason. ‘*Search the Scriptures,*’ said our blessed Lord, not only read, but search, and as our Collect teaches us, ‘Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest,’ and we shall not indeed, believe me, be held blameless, if we idly trust to others to judge for us. We are told ‘to prove every man’s work, whether it be of God.’ And now I will detain you no longer; but ere we part, let us sing a hymn to the praise and glory of God, for praise is specially acceptable to Him.”

In a mellow and rich voice, the Vicar commenced the Benediction, “Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing,” &c. and after giving the last two prayers of the service, the audience broke up, many of the listeners thanking Mr. Gordon, for his lecture.

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## CHAPTER X.

HOWARD GORDON was pleased with his new life at first, it was a novelty; and he bade fair to become an useful officer. Unhappily the pernicious example of his comrades, too many of whom were anything but God-fearing men; added to the bad habits he had been led into by the Captain of the *Vulcan*, did not tend to improve him. He was in debt to some of his companions, for they had encouraged him to gamble to such an extent, that he owed more than he had money to pay with; and as it was necessary to square up his account with Captain Tenby before quitting his vessel, he had been obliged to borrow from some of the young men. They kept him in their power by reminding him of his obligation to them, and their determination to acquaint their commanding officer with the details, if ever he attempted to break from their society. Sin will make cowards of the bravest; it is the upright who have no reason to fear what may be said against them.

With bitter regret did Howard look back to the time when his mind was at ease; but as yet he sorrowed not after a godly manner.

War was raging in the part where the cavalry regiment to which Howard was attached was stationed, and, in all its horrors, a battle-field for the first time was presented to our young friend's view. The native



chiefs were all painted and plumed, and fine noble looking men were some of them. They presented a most warlike and picturesque appearance, as, on the evening preceding that of the battle, Howard, with one or two others, and accompanied by his faithful attendant, Jack, were commissioned to the perilous office of venturing on a reconnoitering expedition, near the enemy's camp. Savages though they were, they yet taught Howard a lesson ; for on their cautious approach, they could, by aid of glasses, distinctly distinguish a large number of the chiefs collected together, evidently engaged in their devotions. They would not engage in battle without crying for help from their gods ; and often might the poor misguided heathen cause us to blush, when we hear of his devotion to his religion.

The morning broke at length, and many an anxious heart beat high with excitement, both of fear and of hope. By their gallant conduct some hoped to win promotion, and others trembled at the thought that, ere the day closed, their homes would have been rendered childless, or their wives be made widows, and their children fatherless.

The trumpets sounded to horse, and, with Jack's assistance, Howard was soon in his saddle. The day was fine, and the sun shone brightly on the glittering spears of the enemy. Banners waved, and trumpets sounded, and the greatest excitement prevailed. A few hours later, and the bright green of the grass was darkly covered with gore, and with the mangled corpses of the dead and dying of both armies. As evening

drew on the battle was stayed, only to rage the more fiercely the following day; and permission was given on each side for the removal of the slain. Howard Gordon felt irresistibly attracted towards a particular spot, from whence, as he imagined, he heard a few faint sighs. Under a heap of slain lay a young non-commissioned officer, from whose parched lips young Gordon at length perceived these sounds issued. Search was already being made for the wounded, and no doubt, ere long, the wretched man would have obtained relief; but Howard's warm feelings prompted him not to wait for this, and calling on Jack to assist him, he bade the lad gently raise the sufferer's head, while he removed from his body the heavy and sickening weight which oppressed him. After a time he succeeded in extricating the poor fellow, and, with the help of the boy, he conveyed him to his own tent, where he applied reviving restoratives, and bathed his face from the blood which covered it. He had done much for the relief of the poor stranger before the surgeon could attend to him.

While washing the man's hands, he had observed a handsome signet ring upon his finger, and being struck with the circumstance,—as by his dress the wounded man was only a sergeant,—Howard attentively examined it, when, to his amazement, he recognized the Glendinning arms, as the crest, engraved on it. There was something in the sergeant's face which struck him as familiar, and he was pondering the matter in his own mind, when the stranger opened his eyes, and turned

them full upon the young man. "Tell me," he faintly murmured, "is there hope?" Howard shook his head.

"I am at peace with God, and I wish to be with man also. If you can find an opportunity, will you send to my regiment, the 23rd Foot, and tell Captain Clayton that Thompson is dying, and begs to thank him for his great kindness, and will feel obliged by his sending off, as soon as possible, to Scotland, the packet he yesterday placed in his hands. I felt as if I should not survive this day's work, and I wished to bid my parent a farewell, and send him my forgiveness, and crave for his. Will you," he more feebly added, "pray for me; and may God abundantly bless you for your kindness."

"Tell me your real name," exclaimed Howard.

Thompson shook his head.—"Not yet," he whispered, "pray first."

Howard hesitated, and coloured violently; but, at another look from the poor creature, he complied, and selected the prayer for the dying, from the Prayer Book which Thompson held to him.

Oh! the power of prayer to strengthen and comfort in every trial! Howard was almost afraid, at first, to be the instrument of conveying help in this way; for, in this hour of a fellow-creature's mortal agony, he could not but think over his unfitness to meet such an awful time himself. But who that sincerely cries for pardon ever fails to receive it. In a spirit of deep contrition, when Thompson feebly asked him to pray again, did Howard exclaim, "Lord Jesus, forgive and

help me now!" Again, he offered up a prayer, and then asked whether he should send Jack in search of the Chaplain, who was most likely in the general hospital tent, but receiving a faint negative, as his services might be too late, young Gordon continued to repeat comforting texts of Scripture, and to offer up short prayers as he saw would most please.

Suddenly the countenance of the dying man was radiant with an unearthly look of happiness. He turned towards Howard, and in a voice singularly strong, he begged to know who he was to whom he was so much indebted.

Young Gordon gave his name, and feeling almost sure that he was right in his surmises, on account of the strong resemblance to the family pictures, he added the fact of his having received his commission from Sir Arthur Glendinning. The sergeant now held out his hand, and grasping Howard's, he said, "I am Cuthbert Glendinning; will you have this ring sent to my father; tell him I die blessing him for his kindness to you, and beg him to think kindly of his poor lost son, and to forgive him. Tell him also, if he can find out poor Uncle Philip's son, to make him his heir: it is my dying wish! Farewell, my friend! Oh, it is so brightly beautiful!—the harps are sounding so sweetly, and \* \* \* \* I am ready; Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" \* \* \* \* \*

With the departing spirit of poor Cuthbert all sense for a time forsook Howard Gordon, his feelings had been much excited, and now he lay almost as still and

motionless as the corpse itself. Jack's screams soon brought assistance, and the young man was removed into another tent, while the dead body of Thompson was carried away to its hasty burial. After a time Howard recovered and was able, by the help of a soothing mixture which was given him, to recruit his strength by gaining a little sleep. He had to resume his duties in the morning, and thus was kept from dwelling too much on the late painful scene. He was an altered being however, he had broken through the bondage in which Satan had so long held him. He had prayed for poor Cuthbert Glendinning, henceforth he must pray for himself. At first he felt afraid when he saw the fight commencing again, lest he should share the same fate, but after a time he began to gain courage and to cry for help to sustain his fainting heart. At length the battle had been fought and won, and many were the commendations bestowed upon the officers and men for their brave acts. There was especial mention made of the gallant conduct of a young officer, who rushing through the ranks, had been the first to plant the standard on the enemy's rampart, and by his courageous example had encouraged the men, and had tended to reassure them, and consequently had been the means in a great measure of winning this important post. Later in the day, seeing his commanding officer beset by several of the enemy, and his horse lying dead beside him, this young soldier, who was no other than Howard Gordon, galloped forward to his assistance, dismounting to give his superior his own steed, he

manfully rescued him, but was unfortunately struck down by an unseen hand.

When the muster-roll was called over, young Gordon and Jack were missing. Colonel Henderson was in sad distress ; again and again was search made, but not even the dead body of his youthful comrade and preserver could be found, and the surgeons whose duties had been so heavy, that they were quite knocked up themselves, could give no further information, than having a faint recollection of hearing a lad lamenting over the body of his master, who must have been dead when he addressed himself to them for help, or they could have done something for him, and he would have been conveyed to the hospital van. After hoping against hope, for some days, Colonel Henderson at last had to report them as missing, and the fear that Howard's dead body had been carried away by the natives, together with its living guardian, the boy Jack.

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## CHAPTER XI.

EVER since his introduction into Mr. Phillips's office, Herbert Grey had been daily confronted by the large iron chest, on which in huge letters was inscribed the name of Glendinning, this particular one, being placed exactly opposite his desk. It had a strange effect upon him evidently, for he often found himself conning over these letters, although knowing them so well, and he would sometimes fancy that the name was familiar to him, but then he remembered that the Gordons had spoken of Sir Arthur. However it might be, a slight circumstance occurred one day, which made him more than ever interested in the subject. Among the particular occurrences which had taken place in former years, and which had found its way into the public papers, the notices of which were kept carefully cut out and pasted into a large book kept for that purpose in the office, was the account of the Glendinning trial for forgery. Herbert had been searching in this book, for some particular subject, and his eye happening to light upon this well-known name, he became immediately interested in it, and resolved to peruse the evidence, as soon as he was at liberty.

On various occasions when the usual hour for dinner came, Mr. Jinks observed his young friend attentively studying this volume. One day he spoke to him, "Grey,

what have you got hold of there, ? I like to see young men work, sir; but all work, and no play, you know Mr. Grey, eh ! sir."

"I am reading this case of the trial of Philip Glendinning, for forgery, Mr. Jinks, and I cannot feel satisfied with the verdict. There appears to me to be a slight contradiction in the evidence, which though but trifling, to my mind is rather important."

"Eh ! what, Mr. Grey, a mistake in the verdict, never was there a truer one, sir ! We were the solicitors engaged on behalf of the prosecution, and though it did seem a cruel pity to condemn such a fine young man, evidence was too strong against him. We did all we could to spare him, but we could do nothing, and of course we were no more eager to win than to lose our cause, as it was all in the same family. Depend upon it, Mr. Grey, never was there a truer verdict. First rate counsel was had, sir, and justice was had I am sure. But what strikes you, eh, Mr. Grey ?"

Mr. Jinks was in a state of great excitement, and had it been any one else who had dared thus to cast even a suspicion of censure upon the case which had passed through the hands of the celebrated Leabridge firm, he would have shown a vast deal more of anger than he could summon up against Herbert, of whose opinion he thought a good deal. As it was, he seated himself directly facing the young man, with his fingers to his mouth, biting away at the unfortunate remnants of his nails.

"Did it never strike you," said Herbert Grey, "as



being peculiarly noticeable in the evidence of the young female servant, that she appears to have been in some way personally anxious to get rid of this Philip. This is the first thing that struck me. But the slight contradiction to which I alluded was this ; she first of all says, she was in the room in which Mr. Philip was writing, and saw a paper lying on the floor, which he snatched up hastily as she came near, and on this scrap of paper she distinctly saw some signatures, which she could swear were either in the old Baronet's handwriting, or else were copies of his writing. She said she had been dusting the room. Now, Mr. Jinks, observe please, in another part of her evidence she had said, that when her young master (as she called this Mr. Philip) was busy with his accounts, he never allowed any one to enter, but always kept his door bolted ! Which seems the most probable,—that he should allow a servant to be dusting his room at the very time in which he was engaged in his business calculations, or that he should bolt his door to prevent intrusion ? ”

“ Well, sir,” quietly remarked Jinks, “ that may have been a special occasion.”

“ I think not ; I have pondered much over this simple discrepancy, and the more I study it, the less do I think Philip to have been guilty. In a few days, sir, I shall ask you to give me a short conference with yourself and Mr. Phillips ; for, if I am not much mistaken, I have met with this very woman myself, and I am only waiting to have my belief confirmed to commence a stricter examination, if not against your wishes,

into my supposed discovery. If, as I am almost convinced, judging by the name, and various hints which were dropped, that this very woman is now living under an assumed name, I may most providentially be made the instrument, in God's hands, of throwing a little more light on the subject. This is in strict confidence, Mr. Jinks ; but I am glad to have spoken to you about it, for you will, I know, yourself impartially think over what I have said, and you may, perhaps, notice the discrepancy I speak of, and be able to make something of it. I should have told you, in the course of another day or two, when my suspicions have been corroborated ; but I do not wish anyone else to know about the matter for the present."

Mr. Jinks was pleased with the confidence reposed in him, and promised to keep silence.

The same evening Herbert went down to the Vicarage, and, in the course of conversation, he mentioned the name of Glendinning, and managed skilfully to turn the tide of talk on the subject of the forgery. "I wonder," said he, "who that servant was, and what has become of her, for she seems by all accounts to have made a great impression in the evidence, against the prisoner, on the minds of the jury ?"

"She was the daughter of an old housekeeper, who had lived in the family for years, and who was married while still in service ; this young woman had been a favourite with the late Lady Glendinning, so the old Baronet kept her in his service after his wife's death, and she was quite a privileged person. I believe, had it not

been for the wise advice of this very Philip, she would have been treated almost as a daughter by the old man, who made the most of every one that had been kind to his lamented lady. The rumour was, that this young person was too fond of the society of the present Baronet to please his brother, who had always borne a good character until the time of the forgery. He had married an excellent lady—a Miss Montgomery,—and at the time of his transportation had one young son. I have often tried to find their whereabouts; but Sir Arthur persisted in declaring that the wife was dead, and the boy was in some asylum for idiots, his mind being so weak that he was quite imbecile. I hold to my original opinion that they had emigrated, and Sir Arthur did not deny it, but refused to hold any lengthened conversation about them at any time. All my efforts proved unavailing, and I never have met with any one who could give me information. They are an unfortunate race. But this servant you were speaking about, I believe, went abroad some time after.”

“Then, I suppose, if she favoured the younger brother, she might perhaps have spited the eldest, especially if he marred her wishes in any way, as you say he did?”

“It is not improbable; but I hardly dare suppose that she gave false evidence against Philip, if that is what you are thinking about.”

“And yet, Mr. Gordon, her *kind* feelings, had she possessed any, would have prompted her to screen the young squire, rather than bring forward every imagin-

able proof against him, volunteering the evidence, as she seems to have done."

Mr. Gordon smiled, and replied "Why Grey, you are better acquainted with the details than I am, though you must have been but a youngster at the time, even if you were born, which I rather doubt. Have you been studying the case? Not, I hope, because you are to have a similar one on hand at this office. Let me see, how many years ago can it be? Do you know, my dear," he added, as Mrs. Gordon entered, "how long it is since poor Philip Glendinning was transported? Here is our young legal friend, deeply interested in the case."

"It must be at least twenty years ago," answered the lady, "for I quite well remember our dressing the baby, who was Howard, in a white frock with black ribbons, because, we said, he must not be out of the fashion, for every one put on mourning for a month after the poor fellow was convicted. But what has made you think of it now, Herbert?"

The young man explained how he had noticed the account of the affair at the office, and that he was quite interested in the matter, and only wished he knew whether the convict was still alive.

"What would you say, Mr. Gordon, if I could discover a flaw in the evidence, and so bring about a fresh enquiry, which might lead to the discovery of the real culprit?"

"Real culprit!" exclaimed Mrs. Gordon, "why, there can be little doubt, I should think. Why, if I remember rightly, it was ascertained, beyond dispute,

that Philip's confession to his father had been, that he was truly sorry that he had not confessed everything to him from the first, when there was a hope that the money might have been restored ; but, by keeping the knowledge of his distress a secret, he had become more and more in difficulties ;—I think it was something of this sort."

"Excuse me, Mrs. Gordon," replied Herbert, "you are perfectly correct in what you say ; but you have perhaps forgotten, that this letter was produced against Philip by his brother, in an unfinished state, which was accounted for by the fact, that this letter was in the convict's desk, and being suddenly called away, his brother, Sir Arthur, had possessed himself of it, and had made use of it at the trial. Philip Glendinning had evidently begun this letter to his father, intending to explain to him about the unsatisfactory state of his affairs. But the prisoner's defence was not that of a guilty person ; and had he had fair justice awarded, he would never, I believe, have been condemned. He was not permitted to account for that letter,—or so, at least, I gather from what is said about it,—for this servant is brought forward to be cross-examined, and the Judge evidently hurries the trial, so as to bring it to an end before the Christmas vacation should commence. I may be mistaken, but I could not resist the wish to inform you, that I believe there may yet be something done to atone for the sad past of this unfortunate man. If his own sufferings are ended, at all events his son may be living, and may not be in too weak a state to enjoy what is lawfully his own."

Before the Vicar could reply, a servant entering, handed him a letter. He took it without a word; but it was noticed that he trembled violently as he looked at the writing, and at the post-mark. He rose and left the room before breaking the seal; and Mrs. Gordon, apologizing to Herbert, saying, she feared there was something wrong, rose also, her lips white and compressed. With a mother's love, she dreaded lest some harm might have happened to her boy, for she knew that news might be expected from Australia; and she thought also, that as war was raging there, that perhaps Howard's regiment might be engaged in it. It had taken little to frighten her, because she had already suffered so much anxiety on his account from the tone of his letters, and from their scarcity. Herbert saw that something had evidently occurred to distress his kind friends, and finding that Laura seemed rather sad also, he tried to reassure her. Gradually her fears lessened, and she began again to ask him about his discoveries as relating to the forgery.

"Oh! Herbert," she exclaimed, "how I should glory in the idea of your making this discovery; it would be so delightful if you could prove the poor man innocent; it would make your name known, and your fortune would be made in a very short time."

"My dear girl, my fortune, I fear, would hardly be made by that; for who would make it for me?"

"Why do you ask such a foolish question? Of course, as the convict would be proclaimed innocent, he would come into possession of all the Glendinning pro-

perty; and, unless he is a most disgracefully ungrateful man, do you suppose that, as you were the means of reinstating him, that he would forget you? \* \* \* \* If I were he, I should give you, at least, the half of my possessions."

Herbert looked at the pretty, animated figure before him, and he could no longer resist the impulse. Taking her hands in his, he softly whispered, "Laura, dearest, there would be something I should prize far more than any amount of gold or silver, and of which I would only be contented by receiving the whole. You know how I love you. You are my dearest treasure!—for you I work, and for you I would labour night and day, if I could win you. I know you love me; but tell me that it is so,—just this once, Laura! Lie your dear little head on my shoulder—so;—now whisper to me, sweet one! and tell me you do love me, and that you will wait a little time longer, until I can come forward, and claim you as my promised bride!"

Blushing and trembling, the young girl had allowed her lover to take possession of her hands, and soon his arm was passed around her slight waist, and her pretty head laid lovingly on his shoulder. Thus she whispered out her love to him, and as he bent down his head to give her his first kiss, as a seal of their engagement, he thought that he had never seen so fair and lovely a creature before. But Laura soon recovered from her embarrassment, for it was no new thing to feel sure of Herbert's attachment, and gently disengaging herself from his embrace, she said, "Herbert, we must not meet

alone again, until my parents have given you their consent."

Scarcely waiting for his answer, she flew quickly upstairs to her own room. Had she done right in allowing him to kiss her, was her first thought. She would tell her mother everything that very night ; She would confess too, how dearly she loved him, and that she would not fear poverty, if shared with him. \* \*

A few hours after, and the voice of lamentation had succeeded to that of joy. While she was listening to the sweet words of love, her parents had been passing through the deep waters of untold misery. The letter Mr. Gordon had received, was from Colonel Henderson, reporting the melancholy news of Howard's loss. It is vain to attempt to depict the parents' agony ; the bitter heart-felt cry for help under this sad blow ; the dreadful uncertainty as to the young soldier's preparedness for death : like David they could have exclaimed, "My son, my son, would God I had died for thee, my son !" Crushed and well-nigh heart-broken, the Vicar remembered that there must yet be mercy in store for them, and drawing his wife towards him he tenderly embraced her and said. "Courage, my own wife, it is a God of *love* who sends this blow. Let us kneel down together, and pray for strength and for submission." They did so ; and who that ever thus pours out the sorrows of their hearts, and lays bare their weaknesses and their wants before the mercy-seat, ever leaves that blessed abode, without feeling strengthened and comforted. In sorrow's darkest hour, is God's love frequently the



most felt, and the sweet accents of our Saviour's voice heard whispering, "It is I, be not afraid." It is in such seasons that we learn the delights of close communion with the Godhead. We are all so apt to forget God, as a near and dear friend, that He sometimes employs, what we *think* harsh correction, but which He makes us *feel* is only a loving chastisement, to make us cling the closer to Him, and to shew us our need of a help higher than man's. Oh! the misery of those, who, when sorrow falls upon them, have no friend to console them, who having neglected their salvation in the hour of prosperity, have not learnt "to cast on Jesus" all their care! Sorrow must be an awful thing, when we have no comforter to abide with us, when we see nought but the avenging hand, and can trace no smiling face behind the cloud.

After a time spent in devotion and in meditation, our friends sought their poor daughter, to break to her the sad news. The extreme of joy will make a Christian need support almost as much as in sorrow, and Laura had fallen on her knees, and had asked the guidance and blessing of her Heavenly Father. In this position her mother found her, and almost thought that she had already heard the sad intelligence. But it was not so, and Laura felt she could not yet intrude her news, at such a time. The poor girl had more need than ever of a kind friend now, for she was in deep distress, and Herbert treated her as a dear sister, when he knew the fatal news, feeling sure that he should best soothe her, by taking the brother's instead of the lover's course for

the present. It was a house of deep mourning, and I might almost have said a *town* of deep mourning also, for there was not an unsympathizing heart in Leabridge. Young and old joined in the lamentation, for if not for Howard, they mourned for the sake of their pastor's distress.

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## CHAPTER XII.

MONSIEUR ANTOINE NARGONNE, and his wife were seated in close conference, over the breakfast table, one morning.

"How strange it is," said Madame, "that so many years should have elapsed since that trial, and that no one, until now, has questioned the truth of the verdict. You always said, Antoine, that Herbert Grey would make a shrewd lawyer; who but he, I wonder, would have discovered the discrepancy in the woman's evidence, and have found out who she was."

"My annoyance is," replied her husband, "that we should have been harbouring such a wretch in our house for all these years. It is true, certainly, that 'murder will out' as I believe the old English saying is, —and *perjury* will equally be found out. It is a mercy for the wretched creature, that she seems inclined very soon to walk out of the world on her own account, or I should have been strongly tempted to have tried whether the law would not have hastened her movements."

"Oh! do not talk so, Antoine, it makes my blood run cold; wicked though she has been, yet I cannot help being sorry for her, because, I know she must have suffered fearful punishment from the prickings of conscience, and she has been a faithful servant to us; now



Antoine you must confess that she has proved her duty by us."

"*Mon Dieu*," replied Monsieur Nargonne, "I am the more annoyed for that very reason. If she had played off any of her tricks here, I would have packed her off long ago, and we should have been spared all further bother with her, whereas now—why, I shall go crazy in a minute, if I think much more about her."

"Well, my dear, you will not be annoyed much longer, I expect. I am very thankful that it has all happened in vacation time, so that you have not had the anxieties of the school.—Now Antoine, do not rub your hair about in that style, and do not frown so, either; I know you too well, to suppose that you are anything but pleased at the idea of being able to rescue an innocent fellow-creature, from a life of undeserved misery."

"Misery! not much of that I expect! Why Glendinning has been spared the worry of having a wife to torment him, as mine is always doing," he answered, with a provokingly calm face.

"If you are not ashamed of yourself, you ought to be," she replied "and see, if I do not plague you, almost out of your senses, you ungrateful being. There, take that and that," she concluded as she kissed his head, "and now I am off for the rest of the morning; I must take my post now as nurse."

Strange things often happen when we least expect them. Such had been the case in the present instance. Herbert Grey had written to Monsieur Nargonne, requesting him to be so good as to inform the writer,

when the person, who acted as housekeeper and general superintendent in the establishment, had entered his service, and by what name she was known there. To these questions, Monsieur Nargonne had satisfactorily replied, and Herbert with but slender matter to work upon, had traced out, by means of a small book which this woman had given him when he was leaving Paris, and which bore the signature, "Molly Barnet," that the person, who applied for the situation, and obtained it by giving false references in England, which Sir Arthur Glendinning, had answered in a feigned hand, from the places to which those letters were addressed, was the very one who had given evidence against Philip. Why he had kept a memoranda of this woman's references, Monsieur Nargonne said he hardly knew, except that at first he thought it wise so to do, and afterwards, most likely he had forgotten to destroy it. Molly Barnet was the name of the servant mentioned in the trial, and at first Herbert Grey could not remember when or where he had seen this name before. Madame Nargonne had always found the woman honest and useful. She professed to be a widow with one little boy, whom she had put out to service, and since her residence with Madame, this boy was supposed to have died, as nothing had been heard of him for some time. What puzzled Herbert at first in his enquiries, was the fact, that this woman had been in England for some years after Philip's transportation, and it was a work of time to find out, as he eventually did, all the following particulars:—This Molly (or Margaret, as she was christ-

ened), was a young person of about one or two and twenty years of age, at the time of Philip's conviction, and it was after the marriage of Arthur that she became a housekeeper in his service. Here she remained for some years, until the death of her lady not giving her the expected position of the Baronet's wife, she threatened to disgrace him publicly, if he did not find her a suitable home, and allow her a good yearly sum for the maintenance of a child which had been born to her shortly after Lady Glendinning's death. Thinking it was wisdom to do as requested, in order to free himself from the woman, who was becoming too presuming, Sir Arthur, hearing of the vacancy in Madame Nargonne's service, recommended Molly to try for it. The salary was a very good one, and it was a first-rate situation in every way. Being of course unable to visit Scotland for that purpose, Madame Nargonne had written to the various ladies mentioned by the woman as her references, and she had received, what she supposed to be genuine and excellent answers to her enquiries. Mrs. Parsons, as she called herself, was pleased with the situation, which happening to be one of importance, suited her. She had been perfectly honest in her post, because she had no need for being otherwise, and Madame Nargonne had placed great confidence in her, although at times, she almost fancied there was something wrong about the woman's character, though not affecting herself.

During Herbert's residence there, the housekeeper had been ill, and during her wanderings, or ravings, she

had mentioned something about the Glendinnings. These scraps of conversation had been repeated before Herbert by Madame Nargonne, and now that events called them into remembrance, young Grey determined to re-call them to that lady's mind, and enlist her services on his behalf. Mr. Phillips had warmly seconded all Herbert's efforts, and he, with Mr. Jinks, gave him permission, not only to take what time he pleased, but also the necessary funds for the prosecution of his search.

Fortune, in a strange shape, seemed to befriend the young solicitor. News was sent him, that if he wished to question Mrs. Parsons, he must lose no time, as she had been seized with a fit of apoplexy, and was lying in a state of the most imminent danger, the physicians giving no hope of her recovery. Herbert Grey, therefore, bade a hasty adieu to his friends, and telling his mother—whom he had kept as yet in ignorance of his work, as he wished to surprise her,—that he should be absent for a few days, he started off for Paris.

He was introduced into the presence of the wretched woman, whose fears he so far worked upon, that she made a full confession of the whole black affair; and, to his amazement and horror, if the dying creature's evidence proved correct, he would be able to bring forward the fact of Philip's innocence, and of Sir Arthur's guilt.

Hastening home with his important document,—for he had taken down the woman's depositions, and had called in Monsieur and Madame Nargonne, and the

clergyman of the parish, as witnesses,—Herbert presented himself at the office, where Mr. Phillips was waiting in expectation of his arrival. Charmed with the young man's clever discoveries, the partners loaded him with praise. And now proceedings must be taken against Sir Arthur, and Herbert Grey was certainly the one to continue the work so well begun. Mr. Phillips forbade any interference in the matter, and promised Herbert to inform his mother of her son's prolonged absence, and its cause, now that success was crowning his efforts.

Taking with him all the necessary forms, and engaging the services of some two or three detectives, to whom Sir Arthur was known, Herbert started off on his unpleasant mission. He had begged Mr. Phillips, or his partner, to communicate with the authorities in London respecting the matter in hand, and ere long he hoped that the glad tidings would be on their way to the long unjustly exiled man. Would he still be living, or had the recall come too late? Such were some of his thoughts as he journeyed north. Cautiously he set about his work on his arrival. The Baronet was at home; would the gentleman please to walk in?—A friend was with him, and he would bring him in also; and his attendant (dressed in plain clothes) would wait about in the grounds, or, if not intruding, would seat himself in the hall. The man looked rather suspiciously at the two companions, but nevertheless asked them to walk in. After a short delay, Herbert was shewn into the Baronet's presence. He was in a loose morning



wrapper, with slippers on his feet. He looked up as the strangers entered.

"Who are you?" he exclaimed, as his eye fell on Herbert.

"I am a gentleman from Mr. Phillips', at Leabridge; I come on a special matter of business with you. My name is Herbert Grey," he continued, as he saw the Baronet eyeing him very scrutinizingly.

Suddenly rousing himself, Sir Arthur replied, "I beg your pardon, Mr. Grey, for keeping you standing so long; pray be seated; and you also, sir,"—turning to the detective. "May I ask your business, Mr. Grey?"

"My business is of rather a painful nature, Sir Arthur," replied Grey; "I wish to ask you whether you knew a young person of the name of Molly Barnet? She was in your late father's service, and subsequently in your own for some years. She is now lying between life and death, and has made a full confession of her share in the false accusation of your elder brother, Philip Glendinning; and as she implicates you, in no slight degree, I am bound to arrest you, Sir Arthur Glendinning, Bart., on a charge of perjury and forgery."

As he spoke, Herbert Grey had advanced and laid his hand upon the shoulder of his prisoner, and the detective locked both doors of the room, to prevent the possibility of escape. But had a thunderbolt fallen at the feet of the wretched man, he could not have appeared more appalled and horror-stricken than he did. He seemed quite to have lost his self-possession, and obeyed mechanically the order to rise, and have his

dress altered for one more suited for travelling in. Hastily telling the servant to pack up his master's trunk, as he was going with himself and friend, on an unexpected journey south ; Herbert gave the other detective charge over the house and its belongings ; sealing all the important desks and chests in which he could find any papers or valuables.

A coach was in readiness to convey the prisoner and his captors, and everything was arranged so quickly and quietly, that none, even of the servants, were aware of the nature of Mr. Grey's errand. While the trio were on their road to Leabridge, Sir Arthur seemed lost in thought, but of what nature it seemed difficult to determine, for there was little, if any, expression on his countenance, save that of perplexity ; for his arrest had been so sudden, he evidently did not realize his position ; he never spoke, even when spoken to, but occasionally he stole furtive glances at Herbert, and once or twice, when he thought he was unobserved, he attentively regarded the young man's features. Arrived at Leabridge Mr. Phillips met them, and in consideration of his rank, the Baronet was taken to this gentleman's house, where he was guarded strictly by the detective until the following morning, when he would be brought before the magistrates for examination.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

On the day of the victory, which had spread so much sorrow, as well as rejoicing, amongst the English troops, a man, habited as a hermit, had been the means of doing many little acts of charity, by administering relief to many of the wounded of both armies. He was an elderly man to all appearance, with a long white flowing beard; his cap was of peculiar make, and concealed his features, in a great measure. He had come to the battle-field on his errand of mercy, and had, as I have said, relieved the sufferings of many, for he was an adept in the healing art, and had a large box with him, in which he carried various herbal mixtures, with different surgical instruments, etc. Among the hundreds of sufferers, he noticed a boy, seated in great distress beside the body of a young and handsome officer, who by his dress he discovered to be a cornet in the hussar regiment which that day had so bravely distinguished itself. On his approach, the boy lifted up his head, and looking beseechingly at him, he whispered, "if you can do anything for him, pray do; the doctors say he is dead, and they will have him carried away from me, I fear; and I do not believe he is really gone; I cannot lose him, he is so good to me."

The stranger stooped down, and placing his hand on the heart of the young soldier, he shook his head; he

then knelt down beside the body, and leaned over it; opening his box he took thence a small looking glass, which he held over the mouth and nostrils; very faintly came a slight suspicion of moisture, as if there was a hope of life still remaining. A small quantity of cordial was forced between the clenched teeth, and then bidding Jack be brave and lend a helping hand, the stranger took off the young officer's sash,—which, being in those days of great breadth and designed for use when required,—he passed under the body of his patient; then giving Jack one end to carry, he took the other himself, having slung his box on his back; and in this way, with occasional rests, they carried their burden to a considerable distance. A cottage of the roughest make greeted their eyesight, and gave Jack fresh courage to proceed, though he was growing very wearied with the weight of their precious charge.

Arrived at length at the cottage, the stranger gently laid the wounded man on a soft bed made of thick skin, and proceeded to examine into his state. He found that the young man had broken his arm, and that a deep wound had been received in his side, which fortunately had just escaped the region of his heart. Internal hemorrhage had taken place, the spear having been evidently poisoned, which had inflicted this wound. Fortunately for Howard Gordon, (for as may have been guessed, it was he) he had fallen into good hands, but it was such a case that even the stranger himself doubted his own knowledge. Before attempting to operate upon his patient, he knelt down, and bade Jack follow

his example, while he poured out his soul in prayer to God for help, and for the safety of his young companion.

\* \* \* \* \*

Six months had elapsed, and Howard Gordon was mercifully restored to health, and would in time have also recovered his strength. How thankful he was for this time of rest and meditation, for he had had an opportunity for repentance, and he availed himself of it. He was an altered being, and now he could hopefully trust that for the future he should be less self-confident. He had been allowed to fall, because, like St. Peter, he had relied on himself, instead of simply trusting in his God ; but bitter had been his repentance, and he was saved.

The stranger had dictated a letter for Jack to write to Mr. Gordon, as he had been made aware, through the enquiries of the boy, of the fact that Howard's death had been announced in England. The astonishment and thankfulness of the family, was almost beyond their sentiments of grief at Howard's supposed loss, and both parents wrote him a most urgent appeal, begging of him to relinquish his present profession. Their wishes had been in accordance with Howard's own, and he had already written to Colonel Henderson, announcing his recovery, and giving him full particulars of the marvellous nature of his rescue, and begging leave to return to England, as soon as his strength permitted, so that he might resign his commission. The Colonel was deeply affected with the news of his safety, and immediately dispatched the

intelligence to England, with the warmest possible eulogiums on his gallant conduct.

Howard Gordon was often puzzled about his new friend, he would at times exhibit the most lively curiosity, especially whenever the young man mentioned anything about home affairs. He questioned Howard about many things, which almost surprised the cornet into the belief that he was talking to one well acquainted with Leabridge and its inhabitants, instead of conversing merely with a stranger. About this time a great change took place in the affairs of the hermit; strange faces were seen approaching the little cottage, and on various occasions, long, and evidently interesting conversations were held between the host and his visitors, and at length the stranger informed Howard that it was his intention to visit England; and as Howard was now able to bear the voyage, he suggested the advisability of their return together. Matters were soon arranged on all sides, and they began their long wished for passage.

Jack was glad also to be in England again, though he had no loving hearts to welcome him, as had Howard; but his master had promised never to send the boy away from him, and so he was happy. Howard learnt that Jack was a solitary being: he did not know whether his parents were living, or at least whether his mother was: he had never seen a father, as far as he knew, and his mother had early sent him to sea, to earn his own living; and though he had written many letters to her, she had not answered them. The

weary journey was at length completed, and Howard was again on his way to his peaceful home. The generous stranger had bidden him farewell before the vessel was anchored, and had promised to give him an early call at the vicarage, as soon as his affairs were settled. In the anxious bustle of leaving the vessel, and of meeting his loving family, Howard had for the time forgotten his benefactor, and he had missed the sight of the old man, (who still was habited in his hermit's dress,) as he stepped on shore, attended by various officials, and was speedily driven away in a carriage specially engaged for him.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Phillips had been true to his promise, and had called on Mrs. Grey, to tell her of her son's prolonged absence; and while praising his steadiness and his good sense, he hinted that he should rejoice if he had such a son. Mrs. Grey smiled, and warmly thanked their benefactor, whom, she said, could not have been kinder had Herbert really been his son. Mr. Phillips thought then, or never, was his time, so he asked Mrs. Grey whether, should her son marry, as was very likely to be the case if he was successful in the work he had in hand,—and she consequently would be left alone,—would she, in that case, accept his home as her own, and give him the right to call Herbert “son.”

Mrs. Grey had stared at Mr. Phillips as if he had been a madman, when he commenced thus to address her: and had not the gentleman been determined to put an end to his suspense by boldly proceeding in his

request, her look must have checked a far less nervous man than he. "What did you say, Mr. Phillips?" she at length gasped out; "What is Herbert's chance of marrying—and whom?"

"Can you shut your eyes, dear Mrs. Grey, to the fact, that your son and Miss Gordon are deeply attached. There is no doubt of Laura's acceptance; and if Grey succeeds in proving this man innocent, as no doubt he will, why then, after such a discovery, he must win for himself golden opinions from the young lady's parents; and, by the end of this year, he will be in partnership with myself and Mr. Jinks, which will enable him to provide comfortably for his household, and he will have this cottage for his own for life." A grateful pressure of his hand, from the lady, was her only answer; and Mr. Phillips, finding she was taken by surprise about her son's affairs, wisely determined not to press for a definite answer.

"I must wish you good evening now, my dear friend, and you must please to think over what I have said. I will not press for an answer until our dear Herbert has proclaimed his engagement, and then I shall beg for a patient hearing."

Before Mrs. Grey could answer he was gone; and she was sitting for some time after, with her face buried in her hands, and at length, as if unable to contain her emotion any longer hidden, she burst into a passionate flood of tears.—"Oh! my own precious boy," she muttered, between her sobs; "my own innocent darling, must you suffer for the crimes of others? You



know not your position ! But then,"—she began in a calmer tone,—“who knows us ? Why must my child’s happiness be sacrificed ? \* \* \* \* Oh ! my God, direct me to judge rightly !” \* \* \* \* She fell on her knees, and long and earnestly did she pray that she might have strength granted her to do whatever was right. Never had the deep bitter sorrow she carried in her heart been spoken about openly ; never even to her son had the secret of their trials been confided. Must she now tell him all, and thus prove to him the barrier to his union with such an one as Laura Gordon. She had been reserved on many points, not only with her friends, but also with Herbert ; and on various occasions he had seen her so violently agitated, that he had ceased to enquire too minutely into his own early history. That there was a mystery about it he knew ; but he never dreamed of the truth. Mrs. Grey gave a passing thought to the subject of Mr. Phillips’s request ; but she supposed it was merely from his wish to promote their welfare, in which she knew he took a lively interest ; and in the innocence of her heart, no doubt, she would have suggested her willingness to take charge of his house, as though she were his sister ;—as his wife it never seemed to occur to her. She had never interfered with Herbert’s work at the office ; and indeed it had been her wish, that he should not confide any of his legal secrets to her keeping, and therefore Herbert had never told her about the discoveries he had made, and she did not make any enquiries either ; her son, she knew, was doing his duty, and likely to get on well in his profession.

His time was so much occupied in the affair, that he was frequently from home ; and knowing how proud the mother would be, when, the whole of the evidence collected, and Philip Glendinning restored to his rights through Herbert's sagacity, which, Mr. Phillips had assured her, would cause Mr. Gordon to welcome him as a son-in-law, this gentleman begged Herbert not to let his mother into the secret of his important work until all was satisfactorily completed.

\* \* \* \* \*

The news of Howard Gordon's recovery, and consequently the false account of his death, had spread quickly through the town of Leabridge ; and such rejoicings and congratulations took place as had never before been witnessed, and the young soldier was fêted and lionized, almost beyond his wishes, when again he was seen in Leabridge. His parents, and especially his father, exulted over the return of their prodigal son, and thanked God, with an unfeigned thankfulness, for the fiery trial which had been the means of making him a true Christian. Howard was anxious to prove his grateful acknowledgement of the late mercies he had received ; and in order to do so effectually, he entered his name as a candidate for holy orders, and in due time he rejoiced the heart of his mother, by becoming as zealous and devoted a minister as his father had been, and still was.

## CHAPTER XIV.

A DENSELY crowded room, was the hall of judgment, to which the late owner of the Glendinning property was summoned to take his trial on the charges preferred against him, for forgery and for perjury. Once more were the two brothers confronting each other. The convict had been sent for, assured of his innocence being satisfactorily proved, and now after nearly twenty years of banishment, he once more stood on English ground. It had been his special request that everything might be conducted as quietly as possible.—With his retiring disposition, when self would be pre-eminent, Herbert Grey had declined an introduction to the late convict, until the trial was ended.

The woman, who had given false evidence against Philip, had died, shortly after her acknowledgment of guilt, but Monsieur Nargonne attended, to corroborate the facts which, in his hearing, had been confided to Herbert and written down by him. A deafening shout of welcome proclaimed the entrance of the long exiled man into court, which was not checked without difficulty until Philip himself stood forward, and raising his hand, after asking permission from the judge, he thus addressed the audience :—"My friends, I thank you for your welcome ; but remember, I beg of you, that, though in a measure this is an occasion for rejoicing, yet still to

me it is a most painful and trying time. I have therefore risen to beg of you to restrain any symptoms of emotion; for I cannot forget that, in standing here to-day, I am condemning another to fearful punishment; and, whether deserved or not, it is a bitter thing to be convicted of felony. I therefore implore of you, as a special mark of favour, to avoid giving expression to any feelings on the present occasion,—but remember that you, as well as I, shall all have to stand in a higher tribunal than this hereafter, and that not one of us can plead ‘not guilty’ then.”


The proceedings of the day were then continued, when it became plainly evident that Arthur, and not Philip, was the guilty man. So subtle had been the nature of Arthur's evidence against his brother, that, had it not been for the discrepancy discovered by Herbert Grey in the woman's account, as published in the former trial, it would have been almost impossible to have convicted him, unless his conscience in later days might have smitten him. The letter which had been brought against Philip, was one which he was writing to his father, acquainting him with the fact, that large sums of money had been drawn out in his name, and that this deception had been carrying on for some time; but Philip at first thought that his father had required this money for some special purpose unknown to himself, and he had not interfered; but when he found that this system had continued for some time, his fears began to be aroused; and soon after this he heard a report that various other gentlemen in the

neighbourhood were complaining of having lost money in a similar manner, and were calling for vengeance on the culprit.

Just at this time Philip received a summons to his home, in which he had left his wife and child for a short period, as he had gone to Leabridge to be able better to investigate into these uncomfortable affairs. This summons, it appeared, was a false one, invented by Arthur to tell more strongly against his brother: for in the meantime he went to the banker, and informed him, that it was his painful duty to point suspicion against Philip; and he made up such a plausible statement, that officers of justice were immediately sent to arrest Mr. Glendinning on suspicion of forgery, which was supposed to be the more likely to be true, on account of his sudden departure from Leabridge. The maid-servant, Molly Barnet, who owed Philip a grudge for his advice to the old Baronet, was ready to swear to anything against her young master; and the paper she protested to have found on the floor of his room, was one on which Arthur himself had been operating. The fact of the similarity of names was another thing which she brought forward, as causing Philip to be the most likely person to forge the signature successfully; and it was suggested that, fearing an exposure, he had not thought it advisable longer to keep his father in ignorance, but that he would have pretended to feign ignorance of the real offender.

\* \* \* \* \*

Philip now explained that his suspicions pointing to



his own brother, whom he knew was of extravagant habits, he had forborne to mention the matter at first to his father ; but now he regretted that, by not having done so, he had given fresh occasion to sin. Arthur knew that a strict investigation was being made by his brother, and having a bitter grudge against him for private reasons, which should hereafter be explained, he had resolved to gratify all his bad passions by laying the crime on his innocent brother. Every point was gone over again, and everything was explained satisfactorily ; and the late convict was escorted out of court as a conqueror, without one blot upon his character.

Sir Philip Glendinning would gladly have released his brother, whose conscience was his accuser to such a fearful extent, that it had been necessary to guard him strictly, lest he should put an end to his wretched existence ; as it was, however, intense mental excitement, —which was the more bitter owing to the lately-received accounts of his son's death, which, through the illness of Howard Gordon, had necessarily been delayed,—added to the upbraidings of his now awakened conscience, had made the late Baronet a pitiable object. The judge had sentenced him to death, although Sir Philip had urged a milder punishment, and would himself have released him entirely. A paralytic stroke, however, defeated the ends of justice ; and it was with difficulty that the wretched man could be carried out of court.

In the course of the trial he had mentioned the fact,

that he had himself been desperately in love with Miss Montgomery, the lady whom his brother had married. He had known her before Philip had been introduced, and her father had rather encouraged the young man's attentions ; but when Arthur proposed, and was rejected by the lady on the score of his well-known profligate character,—(to which, however, her father had lent a deaf ear, as he had, he said, never *seen* any wrong behaviour himself,)—Arthur's love was turned to savage hate, which extended itself to his brother, when he, all unsuspecting at the time of his brother's defeat, met with, fell in love, and was finally accepted by the beautiful Clara Montgomery. \* \* \* \* \*

Was his wife, and was his son alive ?—were questions Philip had eagerly asked. They were ; but he must search them out. Step by step, in their downward career, had the unnatural brother and uncle watched unseen, and almost unthought of by the unfortunate pair ; and as he gasped out to Philip, in trembling and unearthly sounds, the slight clue he could give to their present whereabouts, the wretched creature shuddered, and shook with horror, as he pointed to a young man, who had been an attentive though retiring auditor of the whole affair.

Before the day appointed for the execution, the culprit had given up all fear of a violent death ; the cold hand of the destroyer had done his work, and limb by limb was paralysed ; and the conscience alone seemed to live. Before he was too far gone for utterance the prisoner begged to unburden his mind of another

crime. He had had a child by the maid-servant, Molly Barnet, and he had aided the unnatural mother's wish to send this boy away, from the necessity of providing for him; and, also, because he feared enquiries would be made as to who the lad was; and therefore he gave the woman a handsome sum of money to provide for the boy, on condition that he never saw him more. He expressed his sorrow, and begged for mercy from those he had so deeply wronged. It was granted him; and with tears of fraternal grief over his sad career, did Sir Philip Glendinning bedew the simple mound which covered the remains of his wretched brother.

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## CHAPTER XV.

WE will now turn to brighter subjects, and supposing that a year has passed since the sad event just recorded, we will ask our readers to listen to the cheerful peal of bells which greets our ears as we enter Leabridge. The town seems to partake of the general rejoicing, for its streets look so clean and gay; there are waving banners and triumphal arches erected across the principal roads, and a pretty line of young girls dressed in white, with baskets of natural flowers, of delicate hue, (which they scatter as the bridal procession passes on to the church,) have been escorting the Vicar's daughter from her childhood's home, to the sacred edifice, where she is this day to become the bride of Sir Philip Glendinning's long lost son and heir. With a look of deep confiding love, she promises to love, honour, and obey him; and none can look on the handsome face of the bridegroom, which is lighted up with an expression of devoted tenderness, without feeling sure that he will not easily forget the solemn promises he has made; and every heart present swells with delight at the idea of the happy future, which seems to present itself. There is one person present on this occasion, who looks with peculiar interest on the scene, and who yet heaves a deep sigh, as the ceremony

concludes. He advances however, and is one of the first to salute the bride, and he gives an especially warm welcome to the bridegroom. There is only one other being present, besides himself, who can truly guess at the cause of this sigh. \* \* \* \* \*

Mrs. Grey had not positively refused Mr. Phillips: and when in the exuberance of his delight at the success of Herbert's discovery, he once more gained courage to propose in due form to this lady, she bade him wait for a day or two, and she would give him her answer !

\* \* \* \* \*

A dinner had been given by the Vicar to the returned convict, and Herbert with his mother were invited to meet him; the lady pleaded illness as an excuse for refusing, and well she might plead it, for she was in a state of the greatest nervous excitement possible, and had she been able even to crawl to the dinner, she would have gone, but she was not fit even for that, and she seemed as one uncertain as to what she should do. \* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Phillips had his answer when he called the next day to enquire after the lady, for he also had been absent from the dinner-party through distress on her account; he was welcomed by *Sir Philip Glendinning* !

\* \* \* \* \*

The marriage ceremony was over, and the happy pair had been toasted and complimented, and now were on their wedding tour. "Oh! my Herbert," exclaimed the bride "I almost wish that you had remained as you were, for I should then have proved to every one that I married you for love, and not for money."

"My own treasured *wife*," lovingly replied the husband of a few hours, "you gave your dear love to me when I was almost a beggar; and had I married you then, I should have been rich in that you were mine. I do not think that any one could accuse my Laura of covetousness after such a proof as she has given me. I shall ever look with gratitude upon Mr. Phillips's *office*, as well as with the utmost love upon his dear self: for it was at that office that I learned the statements made at my father's trial, and had the means given me of finding out, through God's mercy, that he was innocent. It almost seems like a happy dream, my own sweet one, to think that I should have been the humble instrument of my dear father's restoration; while it seems awful to reflect that I was the one selected to arrest the real criminal. However, I can think of nothing melancholy to-day. My friend Jack, I find, will accompany us as our attendant. What a strange relationship, is it not? My servant for the time being, (as Howard had expressed a wish that it should be so, in preference to a stranger,) and my cousin! 'Strange things do happen, certainly; and what do you think, my darling, I heard to-day,—that Mr. Phillips will never marry now. He had fallen in love with my mother, thinking her a widow; and when he went for his answer to the proposal, my mother introduced her recovered husband, saying, that he was the bar to their union. Mr. Phillips says he could not help laughing in the midst of his grief. He told me about it to-day; and he says he is so delighted to see

her and my dear father so very happy together, it was only a momentary pang which made him sigh, when he thought that he should never stand in my position. Truly I ought to be, if I am not, the happiest of all happy beings; and now, my own little wife, my sole endeavour shall be to make you happy."

\* \* \* \* \*

And he kept his promise. Every blessing attended the young people; and Lady Glendinning forgot all her early troubles, in the care and affection she bestowed on her grandchildren, whom Mr. Phillips also regarded with quite a patriarchal love.

Sir Philip Glendinning, who in time recovered health and spirits, as did also his amiable lady, often told his grandchildren how Uncle Howard had been left by the doctors as dead on the battle-field; and how an old man, who had been falsely convicted for a great crime, had by his good conduct, won the respect and confidence of the officials, who had given him permission to follow his own tastes, and left him almost entirely unguarded, to wander about, and fix his residence where he pleased; and how this old man had worn a false beard to hide his shaven face, and how he had saved their uncle and cured him without being recognised as their grand-papa.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon were blessed in their children, Howard was a most exemplary minister, and had proved an ornament to the profession; it was rumoured that he would one day lead as his bride to the altar the daughter

of a neighbouring clergyman, who was a most excellent companion for HIM.

\* \* \* \* \*

With all his eminence as a barrister, to which rank, —and that in *no* briefless manner,—he had risen, Herbert Glendinning never ceased to remember his old companions ; and often would he gratefully allude to the time when he was “HERBERT GREY,” in “The Lawyer’s Office.”

*Finis.*









